The COMING PRESENCE

FRANK M. THOMAS

Central BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

RX43
T36

The Coming Presence

The Coming Presence

The Second Advent of Jesus Christ in the Light of Scripture and the World Order

By
FRANK M. THOMAS, M.A., D.D.

προφητείας μὴ ἐξουθενεῖτε
πάντα δὲ δοκιμάζετε τὸ καλὸν κατέχετε

NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO
Fleming H. Revell Company
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

LIBRARY
CENTRAL BAPTIST SEMINARY
KANSAS CITY 2, KANSAS

Copyright, 1913, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 125 North Wabash Ave.
Toronto: 25 Richmond Street, W.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 100 Princes Street

232.6
T456

To
My Brethren of the Louisville
Conference and to
"all who love His appearing"

N15912

Foreword

MANY a day has wailed itself away since Jesus Christ promised to return to this world. Countless weary weeks have swept by with their burdens of care and fear. Myriad months have brought their vicissitudes of joy and sorrow to the hearts of men. The fading years have drifted human graves like autumn leaves. The centuries have come and gone with the lights and shadows of empires since His disciples stood on the heights over against Bethany and heard the angelic messengers say, "Ye men of Galilee, Why stand ye here gazing into the heavens? This same Jesus shall so come again in like manner."

And the Church still waits. She has waited long as men count time. There are those who think that she has misunderstood the message of the Second Advent. Those precious words, which she has clasped to her heart through all this time of waiting, which have strengthened her amidst persecution and have nerved her for battle, these words are now accounted by many wise men, even by some who love Him dearly, to have been fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem, or are being fulfilled at the death of every Christian, or await a larger spiritual and social fulfillment, and are not to be understood as prophesying the personal return of Jesus Christ to "this dim spot men call earth."

To read again these words in the light of Scripture, in the light of the world order, and by the light of the human heart, is the task before us. The problem is one of such central importance, lying in the very heart of Christ's teaching, and involves so many difficulties, that we need to remember the words of Pascal: "The last proceeding of reason is to recognize that there is an infinity of things beyond it. It is but feeble if it does not see so far as to know this. But if natural things are beyond it, what will be said of the supernatural?"

F. M. T.

Louisville, Ky.

Contents

INTRODUCTION 11

The Apostolic Belief—Millenarianism—The Middle Ages—The Problem in Modern Days

PART I

THE ANSWER OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

I. THE ANSWER OF THE EPISTLES 21

The Answer of Paul—The Answer of James—The Answer of Peter—The Answer of Jude—The Answer of Hebrews

II. THE ANSWER OF THE SYNOPTIC RECORD . . 58

The Origin of the Gospels—The Synoptic Problem—The Answer of Mark—The Answer of Matthew—The Answer of Luke—The Synoptic Agreement—The Answer of Acts

III. THE ANSWER OF JOHN 145

The Answer of the Fourth Gospel—The Answer of the Apocalypse—The Answer of the Johannine Letters—Summary of the Scripture Answer

PART II

THE ANSWER OF THE WORLD ORDER

I. THE ANSWER OF THE PHYSICAL ORDER . . 183

II. THE ANSWER OF THE MENTAL ORDER . . 197

III. THE ANSWER OF THE MORAL ORDER . . 205

IV. THE ANSWER OF THE SOCIAL ORDER . . 215

V. THE ANSWER OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL ORDER . 234

VI. THE ANSWER OF THE HEART 242

Introduction

"Christianity had its historical origin at the very centre of what we may describe as the apocalyptic period (300 B. C.–200 A. D.)."—*H. B. Workman.*

"We are beginning to see that the apocalyptic vision, the New Age which God is to bring in, is no mere embroidery of Christianity, but the heart of its enthusiasm."—*F. C. Burkitt.*

THE expectation of the personal return of Jesus Christ to this world has been the hope and comfort of the Church for nineteen centuries. It has been the supreme point to which all her mighty energies have been keyed ; the vast undertone of her life and history. In the words of an able theologian, "The second coming of our Lord is the one all-commanding event of prophecy and the future : Itself supreme, it is always associated with the universal resurrection, the judgment of mankind, and the consummation of all things."

It is difficult for us, who live in the modern world, to realize how dear this doctrine was to the hearts of the early Christians. In the midst of persecution and infinite sorrow the company of believers was comforted by the sure hope that He, who had conquered Satan, Sin, and Death, would return to deliver His earthly Bride from her tormentors, to judge the world and introduce an economy in which sin and death would be abolished forevermore. Such belief nerved them for the struggle with the empire

and sent them happy and willing to horrible deaths, being assured that they would be accounted worthy to have a part in that glorious Day. It was the source in large measure of that divine enthusiasm and boundless energy, which characterized the first Christians. They looked for an early return of their Lord. Especially was this true in Palestine where the converts, being mainly Jews, were profoundly influenced by the Messianic hopes, and naturally looked for a sudden and spectacular overthrow of the existing order, physical, political and spiritual.

But as time passed, and the infant Church felt the merciless hand of persecution, before which perished James, Peter, Paul and most of the apostolic leaders, doubts as to the imminent return of the Lord seem to have arisen. In all probability the Epistle to the Hebrews was penned to meet this situation, to show that Christianity must be shifted to a wider horizon than Messianic Judaism. As the reception of this letter was almost synchronous with the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, it served to focus the attention of Christians beyond the pale of Judaism to a larger outlook than had at first been conceived. Yet the goal of the new outlook is still the Second Advent. For the author of Hebrews distinctly emphasizes it to encourage and warn: "And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment; so Christ also, having been offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them *that wait for Him*, unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 27, 28).

We hear in this passage the note of patient waiting; we see a larger outlook towards the future. By

the close of the first century the eager attitude is changed to one of patient expectancy. This is evident in the writings of John. Though the Second Coming is still distinctly taught the stress is laid not upon its nearness but upon the Christian virtues and especially the communion with Christ which ought to be cultivated so that if He does appear shortly they may not be ashamed in His presence. "And now, my little children, abide in Him; that, if He shall be manifested, we may have boldness and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (1 John ii. 28). Even the Apocalypse, which is commonly supposed to portray sudden and dynamic changes, when studied closely reveals a vast scheme of human history, requiring immense stretches of time for its fulfillment. Yet it too closes with the cry, "Come quickly, Lord Jesus."

So it is evident that during the sixty years which intervened between the Resurrection of Christ and the close of the New Testament Canon, the doctrine of His return underwent considerable modification in the element of time, but not otherwise. There is not the least hint that the fact of His Second Coming was ever questioned by the Apostolic Church. Nor does the general doctrine seem to have been questioned by any Christian scholar until modern times. It is true that in the long history of the Church various interpretations of the Parousia have appeared. The most notable of these is Millenarianism (Chiliasm), or the belief that Christ will reign on earth for a period of one thousand years. This doctrine arose early in the second century and is based on Revelation xx. 6. "It was undoubtedly the faith of some of the Fathers, such as Papias, Justin, Irenæus, Cyprian,

Tertullian, and Lactantius, but by no means at any time the faith of the Church, as is proved by its absence from the early Creeds. It may be said, further, that as a general belief Chiliasm vanished from Christendom with the fourth century. It was resolutely opposed by those—such as Caius of Rome and Dionysius of Alexandria, who denied the apostolicity of the Apocalypse. The Alexandrian theology, always spiritualistic and allegorical, condemned it on account of its grossly carnal conception of the earthly reign of Christ with the saints. Clement and Origen strongly argued against it in every form. With the accession of the empire, under Constantine, to Christianity the main inducement to cherish such a hope of a speedily visible return of a victorious Redeemer passed away. Augustine and other teachers introduced an interpretation of the First Resurrection and the Millennial Reign which referred both to the present estate of Christianity ; and this has been in subsequent times the prevalent Catholic interpretation."[1]

But the influence of Chiliasm in the early Church must not be underestimated. It was the view of the powerful sect of the Montanists and was largely held by orthodox Christians. Though a variant form of the creedal faith as to the Second Advent, it contributed powerfully to its general strength. As Professor Burkitt has pointed out, "Christianity was organized for a time of catastrophe." The world crash came and social institutions dissolved ; the Church alone survived. "When in the third and fourth centuries the Church conquered the State,

[1] Pope, "Compendium of Theology," Vol. III, p. 396.

apocalyptic literature lost its main motive. The Parousia was pushed into the dim distance; the world-power was beneath the foot of the saint. Apocalyptic literature became discredited, and, as far as possible, forgotten." At the beginning of the tenth century there was a wide-spread expectation of Christ's return. This was due in part to the evils of the time, to the downfall of the empire, and above all to the fact that the thousand years which had elapsed was construed by many as ushering in the end of the world. This thought of the nearness of the Second Coming had a tendency to sober men, to set them on the task of preparing themselves and the world for the last Judgment. "The crimes of all classes made such an expectation reasonable; they were greatest and most abominable in the class which existed to testify of righteousness. This belief gave a solemnity to the minds of better men. It left its impression upon the age. It became an age of movement, of energy, even of reformation; contrasting in all respects with the base and petty one which had preceded it."[1]

When the Reformation of the sixteenth century appeared Luther taught that the Return of Christ was not far off. The Anabaptists taking hold of this belief and uniting it with Chiliasm "preached a carnal reign of Christ upon earth, as Fifth Monarchy men in England afterwards did with frightful consequences to life and morals." Since then no large body of Christians has made the Second Advent prominent in their teachings, though many noble spirits, like the late Dr. Bonar, who edited the

[1] Maurice, "Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy," Vol. I, p. 506.

Quarterly Journal of Prophecy, have strongly advocated the nearness of Christ's return. One reason why this belief, so prominent in the early Church, has not held corresponding importance in modern times has been due to the new attitude of man towards the physical or external world. In ancient times he knew but little about it, and in many ways dreaded it. To-day he has sent out his lines of investigation in every direction, so that he is beginning to have a large and interesting map of the natural universe. He has been so impressed by its vastness and wonder that it is difficult for him to conceive of its sudden destruction. This attitude has so reacted on his theology as to postpone the Second Coming to the remote future, or to so spiritualize it as to leave the natural order unaffected.

Then the rise of the social conscience has created a larger hope for the future of mankind on this earth. The present status of human thought has been well stated by an eminent American thinker:

"Looking along one line, the observer is bidden to behold the Christian Church, or social organization of believers, universal and triumphant. This organization is to extend itself through all the ages, and over every age, tribe, people and nation—until all the earth shall know the Lord. Then the race is bound together in bonds of love and fraternal union; war is no more; all preventable diseases and death are abolished; and the world that 'lay in the Wicked One,' according to the early Christian conception and figure of speech, has become a new world, an ideal community of redeemed ones. But looking along another line, he is bidden to imagine the fulfillment of that apocalyptic vision which early Christianity received from Judaism; and which, largely by the speculative insight and skill of Paul, was made for centuries the prevalent belief

of the orthodox Christian Church. Christ returns to earth; the dead are raised; the judgment is made final; and the union of all the sons of God in one community of the blessed is made complete."[1]

This is a just statement of the two conceptions now struggling for supremacy. The one may be called the social, the other the apocalyptic interpretation. They are not necessarily contradictory, a true synthesis being possible. Yet as a man leans to one or to the other his view of human life becomes profoundly changed. This is evident in the call heard in a mission field of the Church for her to adjust her teaching and energies to the new view. One missionary of a great evangelical denomination has gone so far as to demand that the Gospel be preached to some peoples rather than to others. He says, "Some races are more worth saving than others. Common sense would seem to say that we ought first to attempt the living and progressive peoples who hold in their hands the keys of the future."[2]

While it is true that the Church generally has not felt the force of these changing ideas, in time they will surely filter through the ministry to the laity. With what result? No one can say, save that in such an event the Church would rely more on a scientific study of humanity than on the inner call of the Spirit. If it were possible for the social and apocalyptic views to be united, then a true outlook would be acquired. Yet, on the other hand, it is a fact that throughout the past the Church has either acted under the inspi-

[1] Ladd, "Philosophy of Religion," Vol. II, p. 563.
[2] "Missions and Modernism," *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. II, p. 2.

ration of a vision, or has been subservient to practical policies. Whether she can, in the future, unite the two remains to be seen. However this is true; if the Second Advent be postponed in thought to some remote period, or so spiritualized as to rob it of its cosmic reality, then one of the most powerful, convicting and comforting ideas of the Church will be lost to it. If the historical conception of the Parousia be untrue then it would be wise to let it pass. For no price is too great to pay for truth. Yet if we surrender what the Church has most surely believed for centuries simply because some men have posited fallacious statements, then we have robbed our souls for naught.

The purpose of the following pages is to examine into the nature of the Second Advent, by setting forth the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, and then testing these teachings in the light of the world order, physical, mental, moral, social, ecclesiastical, and last of all by the light of the human heart.

PART I

The Answer of the New Testament

"Where there is no vision, the people perish."—*Prov.* xxix. 18.

"The human mind will in the end accept that theory which covers the greatest number of particular facts and harmonizes best with the sum total of knowledge."—*Professor Sanday.*

"We look in spiritual matters too much to the opinion of the few—to experts and specialists, priests, Councils, Congresses; we have too little faith in the Holy Spirit filling the Church, in the *communis sensus* of the body of Christ and the general suffrage of the citizens of the divine commonwealth. Yet, however we disguise the fact, it is with this grand jury that the verdict ultimately lies."—*Professor Findlay.*

I

THE ANSWER OF THE EPISTLES

"One single verse, one sentence of text, is of far more instruction than a whole host of glosses and commentaries, which are neither strongly penetrating nor armour of proof."—*Luther.*

"It is a good thing that the historical Jesus should overthrow the modern Jesus, should rise up against the modern spirit and send upon earth, not peace, but a sword. He was not a teacher, not a casuist; He was an imperious ruler. It was because He was so in His inmost being that He could think of Himself as the Son of Man."—*A. Schweitzer.*

BEFORE proceeding to study the teachings of the Scriptures as to the Second Advent, it might be well to say a few words as to the authority of the New Testament. This has been much assailed in modern times. Even many who have been profoundly impressed by the unique and powerful personality of Jesus have not hesitated to parcel out His words according to their conception of the facts of His life. Some sayings have been regarded not as the words of Jesus, but as due to the influence of Jewish ideas on the minds of the Apostles; others, which do not square with some modern ideas, have been even looked upon as the interpolations of copyists.

Too often in meeting such attacks the Church has fallen back upon a hard and fast theory of inspira-

tion. The result has been that advanced criticism has been enabled at times not only to take the outer defenses, but to penetrate to and assault the very citadel of Faith. It is true that the Church has never been without able defenders of the general orthodox position, and of late years their number has been augmented, yet these have been somewhat hampered by the unwillingness of the Church to allow them to repair and hold the outer walls by a new change of front, lest her traditional theory of inspiration might be impaired. Hence some of the men who from a love of Christ and His truth have attempted it have been looked upon with suspicion and at times branded as heretics. This has not been due to an evil spirit in the Church, but has its origin in a lack of knowledge as to the real issues involved, and also from a noble and praiseworthy desire to keep intact the Revelation committed to her keeping.

But the time has now come when she can no longer remain in her inner citadel of experience. She must recover and readjust her whole battle-front if she is to conquer the world for Christ. A temporary success here and there will not avail. For the great waves of modern culture are beating ceaselessly and mightily about her very foundations. She must harness these very waves to her will. She must sift for herself the processes of criticism, and separate from the chaff the precious golden grain—the intellectual seed-corn of the world's spiritual harvest. For as a leader in one of her great divisions has so well said, "We are living in the twentieth century; and unless we wish to incur the just suspicion of idiocy, we must gather and use all that is offered to us by the master

workmen who are toiling with such infinite diligence in this end of the ages to find out whatever may be discovered concerning the mind and purpose of God towards our lost world." [1]

The Answer of Paul

Amid the doubts that have arisen concerning historic Christianity one figure stands out clear-cut and unshaken—Saul of Tarsus. That he lived in the first century of our era and that he wrote at least four of the Epistles bearing his name even the most critical scholars have been forced to admit. And there is no strong reason, historical or otherwise, why we may not attribute to Paul the authorship of all the letters bearing his name save the Epistle to the Hebrews, which though somewhat Pauline in tone, is evidently by another hand. With the letters of Paul before us what do we find? An account of the religious consciousness of one of the most powerful personalities this earth has known. All attempts to explain such a life by theories of mental reversion or self-deception are doomed to failure. The facts involved are too far reaching and too significant: they link themselves too deeply in the world order to be catalogued under the head of illusion of any kind. That any element of fraud entered into Paul's experience has been shown to be utterly untenable. In truth his life remains inexplicable unless we accept his explanation of it. And what was his explanation? That at mature age, this Pharisee of the Pharisees, a persecutor of the early Christians, while on his way to Damascus breathing out threatening and slaugh-

[1] Bishop Hoss.

ter, was suddenly arrested by a vision of Jesus Christ.[1]

The reality of this vision is attested by two facts. First, Paul never doubted the character of this vision, and it is well known to alienists that illusions do not persist in otherwise healthy minded persons. Secondly, the consequences arising from this vision in the mind of Paul have been nothing less than stupendous and world-making. The proud Pharisee, whose religious outlook was bounded by the circumference of Judaism, became an humble, self-sacrificing tent-maker, content and happy to spend his life in service for the lowest and meanest of mankind. And wherever he went through the Roman Empire which was hastening to its moral dissolution, the light of a new civilization began to gleam in the deepening darkness. If such vast effects follow a fever of the imagination, then the best thing for the human race would be an epidemic of such insanity. Unless we accept the explanation given by this creator of civilization we involve ourselves in an intellectual labyrinth from which there is no hope of escape. Not merely did he claim to have been the subject of a supernatural vision, but he also claimed to have been the recipient of a divine revelation. In one of his early letters, the Epistle to the Galatians, he says: "I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it was not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ."

Paul claimed for his message a unique and solitary

[1] See Lyttleton's "St. Paul's Conversion."

character. He had not received its contents from man, nor do we find in his letters any statements resting entirely on the testimony of others. He is himself a witness to the truths which he proclaims. As Professor Findlay says:

"Paul's Christianity was no combination of Jewish and Greek elements imposed from without; it was born out of the inward travail by which Christ was in him. Not that the Pauline Gospel leaped full-grown and armed from the author's mind at Christ's lightning-stroke. But it was born at his conversion in its essential elements and features and with all its latent potencies. St. Paul's Old Testament knowledge and training, his striving after legal righteousness and his poignant conviction of sin, his Rabbinical culture, his large acquaintance with the Gentile world, constituted the material to which the revelation of the living Jesus supplied the magnetic centre around which that troubled world of thought and feeling crystallized as in a moment."[1]

That Paul believed and accepted the historic facts of the earthly life of Jesus is beyond question. They must have constituted a necessary part of his missionary preaching. But the burden of his teaching was the great redemption wrought in the soul by the Risen Redeemer. The change wrought in himself had been so mighty and marvellous that he never ceased to wonder at it. Back of this he does not seem concerned to go, save to show how all of God's gracious purposes culminated in the Incarnation. His whole thought is continually leaping forward to that glorious hour when he shall be enabled to receive that fullness of life for which he was apprehended by Jesus

[1] Hasting's D. B., Vol. III, p. 717.

Christ. Since man in his integrity is composed of body, soul, and spirit, then such a realization must be preceded by the resurrection of the body. But this resurrection can take place only at the coming of Christ: "Christ the first-fruits, then they that are Christ's at His coming."

That Paul believed and taught the Second Coming of Christ as a definite event and manifestation is absolutely certain. With the exception of the letter to the Galatians, this subject is the key-note of his earliest epistles. The admonitions in First and Second Thessalonians are buttressed on this fact. In the first letter he writes:

> "But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (iv. 15–18).

In this classic passage, which has been the hope and comfort of millions through the centuries, we face one or two great problems of New Testament criticism. It is claimed by some scholars, notably Professor Charles, to whose scholarly studies of Jewish Eschatology every student must forever be

deeply indebted, that Paul's apocalyptic ideas underwent considerable change as time passed. Hence it is well to grasp firmly the conception of the Second Advent portrayed in this passage, so that it may be compared with later statements in the Pauline Epistles. It is too often confidently assumed that we can trace an evolution of doctrine in the New Testament. That there are traces of spiritual clarification must be admitted, but when we remember the tendency of Jewish apocalyptic to fashion new forms for itself, we are struck by the fact that the ideas of the New Testament seem to have been breathed upon by both a mighty creative force and also an arresting power. We seem in the presence of a mighty personality who fuses together all that is best in Jewish apocalyptic, stamps it with his own authority of truth, and then seals its content for all time.

It is well to remember this in the great discussion now taking place as to how much of the apocalyptic teaching in the New Testament is due to the authority of Jesus or the inwriting of His disciples. The disciples, especially Paul, claim for their doctrine the authority of Christ. And when all the evidence is presented and weighed it is difficult to resist the conclusion that behind the main truths of the New Testament is the personal teaching of Jesus. Paul not only heard from the lips of the other disciples the sayings of Jesus, but he himself claimed to have been the recipient of special revelation. In his letter to the Galatians he says,—

"For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man,

nor was I taught it, but *it came to me* through revelation of Jesus Christ."

In the same chapter he tells us that straightway after his conversion he conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before him, but went away into Arabia, and afterwards returned to Damascus. The three years which he spent in Arabia, immediately after his conversion, are of profound significance in understanding his later religious consciousness. There in solitude the whole field of Jewish prophecy and apocalyptic lay open before him. He knew the hopes and dreams of Israel. He saw in Christ and His teachings the fulfillment of that prophecy, the solution of that apocalyptic. There has been much discussion as to Paul's debt to Jewish contemporary thought. That he carried over into his system some important matter from the Messianic hopes of his time is beyond question, but he did so on the authority of his Master, who had been crucified because He claimed to be the Messiah. As we have just quoted from Professor Findlay, "the revelation of the living Jesus supplied the magnetic centre around which that troubled world of thought and feeling crystallized as in a moment."

If, as we are forced to believe, the Risen Redeemer appeared to him on the Damascus way, then it is impossible to escape the conclusion that the spirit of Jesus brooded over him in his retirement, clarified his Jewish outlook, and assisted him to construct that philosophy of life which remained practically unchanged throughout his career. Some of his ideas,

as we shall see, took on a more spiritual form, but their fundamental nature remained intact. It will be forever impossible to trace all the root ramifications of the ideas—Jewish and Christian—which dominated Paul. A complete dissection of his religious consciousness is beyond any human scalpel. The problem before us is to arrive at his teaching concerning the Parousia of Jesus Christ and test that by the rest of the New Testament and by the facts of life.

Although Professor Charles denies to Paul a thoroughly consistent and coherent system of eschatology we may claim as applicable to Paul's teachings the words with which he opens his discussion of New Testament eschatology:

"When we pass from Jewish literature to that of the New Testament, we find ourselves in an absolutely new atmosphere. It is not that we have to do with a wholly new world of ideas and moral forces, for all that was great and inspiring in the past has come over into the present and claimed its part in the formation of the Christian Church. But in the process of incorporation this heritage from the past has been of necessity largely transformed; it no longer constitutes a heterogeneous mass of ideas in constant flux—a flux in which the less worthy, quite as frequently as the more noble, is in the ascendant, and in which each idea in turn makes its individual appeal for acceptance, and generating its little system, enjoys in turn its little day. When received, however, within the sphere of the cosmos of Christian life and thought, all these forces and ideas gradually fall into their due subordination to its centre, and contribute harmoniously to the purpose of the whole. For the Messiah now assumes a position undreamed of in the past, and the membership of the kingdom is constituted, firstly and predominatingly, through relationship to its Divine Head. In the next place we have to remember

that in the teaching of Christ and of Christianity the synthesis of the eschatologies of the race and of the individual has at last been fully and finally achieved."[1]

When Paul came from his seclusion and in contact with the personal followers of Jesus he found his system confirmed by their report of His teachings. He was naturally a more logical thinker than any of them, and with the exception of John saw more deeply into the fundamental nature of Christianity, but the most searching criticism has failed to show any serious divergence between his teachings and that recorded in the other New Testament writings. Even in that mysterious conception of "antichrist," which has so puzzled scholars, Paul the earliest writer (if we except James) and John the last are in harmony and agreement. When Paul wrote his first letter to the Thessalonians its strong teaching as to Christ's Coming seems to have had an effect which he did not intend. Members of that church, thinking the Advent to be at hand, neglected their daily tasks, and gave themselves up to a wild enthusiasm, a feverish restlessness, which sapped their moral strength. To correct this he wrote his second epistle:

"Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, that the day of the Lord is just at hand; let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and ex-

[1] "Eschatology," p. 306.

alteth himself against all that is God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things. And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season."

Paul had not taught them that the Second Coming was imminent. He had taught them that the Return of Christ would be as a thief in the night and had urged them to be watchful and ready. The words "we who are alive" in the first letter cannot be pressed to mean that Paul himself expected to be alive at the Parousia. For, as Farrar pointed out, years afterwards he wrote, "He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up *us* also by Jesus." If the *we* is generic in one passage it must also be interpreted as such in the other.

But it has been claimed that "St. Paul starts from the fundamental thought of Jewish apocalyptic that the end of the world will be brought about by the direct intervention of God when evil has reached a climax." That the thought of a renascence of evil is deeply imbedded in Jewish apocalyptic is admitted. As soon as Jewish hope abandoned the idea of the triumph of righteousness on the present earth and looked for "a new heavens and a new earth," then the conception of a recrudescence of evil and its final overthrow necessarily arose. But Paul's teaching on the subject seems to rest on the authority of Jesus, for we find the same prophecy of an apostasy in the Synoptic Gospels, in the writings of John and Peter.

Shaw in his admirable studies of The Pauline Epistles has an illuminating paragraph on this point: "It

may seem indeed strange that if Christianity, in its onward history, is to extend in influence over the world, there should be such an intensification of the power of apostasy at last. The natural thought is that by that time the true religion, having overcome the inner principle of evil, should rather find its foe increasingly enfeebled and ready to perish. Dorner, we believe, points to the true explanation of this when he says:

"'Since the process of Christian grace is and remains ethical in character, *i. e.*, since it is conditioned by human freedom, it follows directly, from the growing influence of Christianity in the world, that those who nevertheless persevere in resistance will be impelled and hardened by the stronger revelation of Christ, to more and more malignant, especially to more spiritual forms of wickedness, in order to hold their ground against it. Other religions of a higher class look for extension by simple growth, and at least uniform victory in the main. Christianity shows such confidence in its truth and victorious strength, that it predicts a great apostasy in relation to the very time when its influence on humanity has become greatest, while conscious of being a match for the apostasy. Certain of its indestructibleness, from the first it reckoned on this fact. Momentary overthrow it will convert into the foil of its all the more glorious triumph.'"

As to "the man of sin," Bossuet, whose brilliant investigations into the Antichrist legend have caused so much controversy, has, we think, supplied the key that unlocks the mystery. He says, "The figure of the Antichrist is . . . in all probability, nothing more than the anthropomorphizing of the Devil."[1] And again, "It is very likely that 'Antichrist' is

[1] "Religion d. Judenthum," p. 486.

originally nothing less than the incarnate devil, and that the idea of the battle of God with a human opponent, in which all devilish wickedness would become incarnate, arose under the influence of definite historical conditions." It is claimed by both Bossuet and Charles that the phrase "the man of sin" is a translation of the Aramaic for the "Evil One." Professor Kennedy well says: "Whatever may have been the exact lines along which St. Paul reached the thought of a combination of evil in that strange figure, designated by him 'the man of lawlessness,' it appears to us that the description sheds some valuable light on the manner in which he expected his conception to be realized. It is apparent that he has no definite historical personage in view. So much seems to be implied in the use of the term ἀποκαλύπτειν to denote his appearance on the scene of action. We are led to infer from the term that the principle embodied bulks more largely before his mind than the person in whom it finds expression."[1]

The principle implicit in Paul's prophecy as to "the son of perdition" is vindicated by the facts of life and history. Evil always issues forth from a personality and reaches its climax of iniquity in a spurious spirituality. The conditions of the times justified the conception which formed itself in Paul's mind. Jesus in His last hours on earth had hinted at the presence and power of an Evil One whose hour it was. And when Paul wrote to the Thessalonians the world seemed to be approaching another evil hour. The Jews, the very chosen ones of God, were filling up the measure of wrath by persecuting the

[1] "St. Paul's Conception of the Last Things," p. 218.

followers of the Messiah whom they had crucified. The Roman emperors, stopping at no crime, permitted themselves to be worshipped as gods. The only restraining powers apparent were the laws of the empire, which guaranteed a measure of personal safety to its citizens. The spiritual horizon seemed bounded by an angry cloud of world history, ever sweeping nearer, surcharged with lightning, and holding in its breath the destruction of the present order. Behind that storm vail Paul seemed to perceive the presence of "the lawless one" and beyond him the coming Christ.

We shall find in our study of the New Testament that the vision of most of the Apostles was shortened as to the future. But this in no wise impairs the truth and even the reality of their spiritual outlook. The prophecy as to "the man of sin" has already been fulfilled in no small measure, and in all probability awaits a still larger fulfillment. For the spirit of Antichrist is no other than a denial of the divinity and rulership of Jesus Christ, having its source in the Powers of Darkness. As John says, "There are already antichrists," and there yet may be one who shall gather in himself all the power and attributes of the man of sin. And just as Paul was unable to clearly see him against the stormy future, so when he does appear, be he one or many, the most spiritual then living may be unable to detect his presence. For as has been pointed out by Professor Denny:

"As evil approaches its height it assumes ever more spiritual forms. There are some sins which betray man on the lower side of his nature, through the perversion of the

appetites which he has in common with the brutes: the dominance of these is in some sense natural; they are not radically and essentially evil. The man who is the victim of lust or drunkenness may lose his soul by sin, but he is its *victim;* there is not in his guilt that malignant hatred of good which is here ascribed to the man of sin. The crowning wickedness is this demoniac pride: the temper of one who lifts himself above God, owning no superior, nay, claiming for himself the highest place of all. This is rather spiritual than sensual: it may be quite free from the gross vices of the flesh, though the connection between pride and sensuality is closer than is sometimes imagined; but it is more conscious, deliberate, malignant, and damnable than any brutality could be. . . . The man of sin is not described as a sensualist or a murderer; he is an apostate, a rebel against God, a usurper who claims not the palace but the temple for his own. This God-dethroning pride is the utmost length to which sin can go. The judgment will not come till it has fully developed; can any one see tokens of its presence?" [1]

The very principle of this "lawlessness" is a refusal to submit to the Revelation of God in Jesus Christ, a denial of His Divinity, opposition or indifference to the spread of His Kingdom. But whatever form it takes, one or many, it will vanish before His Presence. His appearance will be the cause of its destruction. In the phrase "shall slay with the breath of His mouth" there seems to be an echo of Isaiah xi. 4, "with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked." Professor Adeney says: "The passage from Isaiah, and the subsequent description of the destruction to be brought about by the 'manifestation of His coming,' or presence, point to a metaphorical idea of more direct influence, as though

[1] "Expositors' Bible," Thessalonians, p. 315.

the very breathing of Christ on the great enemy would be sufficient to slay him."

If the love of Jesus, breathing through the vail between the finite and infinite has already caused so many terrible evils to vanish from human life, will not evil at His final and full manifestation flee from His Presence? Two words used by Paul in Second Thessalonians mark a spiritual advance in his thought concerning the Second Coming of Christ. In both Epistles he uses the technical word for "coming"—Parousia (*παρουσία*). This literally means "presence" and many difficulties would have been obviated in theology had this translation taken the place of "coming." It is true that the Apostles at first looked for a coming upon the clouds of heaven, but the more spiritual interpretation finally triumphed in the New Testament. We see indications of the change even in Second Thessalonians. In describing the destruction of the "lawless one" by the "manifestation of His presence" Paul introduces the word Epiphany (*ἐπιφάνεια*), which signifies the breaking forth of a light hitherto hidden. Already the idea is at work that the Second Advent is not so much a "coming" as a manifestation, though it is not as yet dominant. The other word used by Paul is found in 2 Thessalonians iii. 5: "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the *patience* of Christ." The Thessalonians are urged to wait in patience for Christ's coming. This is a new note. In his first letter he had flung out the great and awful truth of the Second Advent with no note of time. The letter had practically closed with the mighty prayer: "And the God of peace Himself

sanctify you wholly ; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he who calleth you, who will also do it." But in the later epistle while abating no jot or tittle from the truths set forth in the first letter, he emphasizes the human conditions of grace and the necessity for each one to labour in quietness and patience. "For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. But ye brethren, be not weary in well-doing."

Herein we find one of the characteristics of New Testament apocalyptics. The ethical note is never lost sight of. The end of the present order is not portrayed in order to draw attention from present duties but to reinforce them. Duty and destiny travel together as in no other books in the world. It is sometimes claimed that Paul in his later Epistles gives less prominence to the Parousia. But we shall see that this is an error.

The letters to the Thessalonians were followed after an interval of a few years by a series of four Epistles, "the most remarkable of all the utterances of the Apostle." These are Galatians, First and Second Corinthians, and Romans. The first of these contains no allusion to the Parousia. It is a theological treatise setting forth the doctrine of justification by faith. Like a great strategist Paul keeps the field clear of every other thought as he drives home the solemn and blessed truths of the new life in Jesus

Christ. But when we take up his first letter to the Corinthians we behold a wider prospect. In the first chapter he addresses them "as waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall confirm you unto the end, that ye may be unreprovable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here we meet with a phrase "the day of our Lord," which becomes one of the designations of the Second Advent.

In the second chapter he says: "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. But if any man buildeth on the foundation gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble; each man's work shall be made manifest; for *the day* shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire shall prove each man's work of what sort it is." In the fifteenth chapter, the sublime resurrection passage, he vindicates both the resurrection of Christ and of His followers: "But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first fruits of them that are asleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die so in Christ shall all be made alive. But each man in his order: Christ the first fruits; then they that are Christ's, at *His coming.*" We here meet again the word Parousia, the technical word used by most of the New Testament writers to designate "the future, visible return from heaven of Jesus the Messiah to raise the dead, hold the last judgment, and set up formally and gloriously the kingdom of God" (Thayer, "Gr.-En. Lex."). Yet as we have seen the fundamental meaning of this word is not so much "a coming" as "a presence." To the personal disciples of Jesus the

idea of His Second Advent was profoundly influenced by His ascension. "Shall so come in like manner." And we must not exclude the fact that the glorified body which Jesus carried into the eternal order does not even there possess the full ubiquity of which His spirit is the possessor. We must remember Hooker's profound discussion on this point in the fifth book of his Ecclesiastical Polity and on which the late Bishop of Oxford has an illuminating note :

> "Yet even now in heaven, though the glory is released for its full effect, still that body which 'God hath in many ways above the reach of our capacities exalted' is 'a body consubstantial with our bodies,' keeping still that nature and those limitations which are essential to its reality as a human body." [1]

So that in any proper interpretation of the Last Advent we must hold fast to both the idea of a manifestation, an unveiling, a parting of the finite screen, and also to "a coming," a drawing near to this dim spot that men call earth of the glorified body of Christ. Even Prof. Von Dobschutz who looks upon the doctrine of a bodily resurrection as an Apostolic addendum to Christ's teaching is compelled to admit at the close of his careful discussion of the eschatology of the Gospels that "this looking out for some external real change is well combined with the finest and best inwardness. The Christian is a new creature, but he looks for a new heaven and a new earth, and his prayer will be forever as his Lord taught him: 'Thy kingdom come.'" [2]

[1] "Introduction to Hooker," Book V.
[2] "The Eschatology of the Gospels."

Christianity is not yet ready to surrender its belief in the resurrection of the body, though in its best form it has never held to the literal raising from the dust of the identical bodies buried there. The Pauline conception of the resurrection is a noble and profound one and has many implications of science and philosophy in its favour. In Paul's day there were men who affected "superior knowledge" affecting the "wisdom of this world," who cherished the rooted prejudice of Greek culture against the idea of a bodily resurrection.[1] They still have their descendants. As a rule their knowledge of the profounder aspects of life is superficial and they lose sight of the truth laid down by one of the ablest thinkers of the last century: "Religious conceptions violate the demands of æsthetic truth, in order to present a deeper and truer idea of essential, spiritual existence."[2]

In Second Corinthians (i. 14) Paul speaks of "the day of our Lord Jesus," and again (v. 10), "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or evil." In the Epistle to the Romans the Advent is mentioned specifically but once, though it underlies the whole letter and especially its greatest chapter. In the eighth chapter, perhaps the profoundest interpretation of the present universe ever penned, he says: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward.

[1] Findlay, "Ex. Gr. Test.," p. 917.

[2] W. T. Harris, "Introduction to the Study of Philosophy," p. 233.

For the expectation of the creation waiteth for manifestation of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to frailty, not of its own will, but by reason of Him, who hath subjected it, in hope that the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God."

According to the implications in this passage the Advent of Christ will be accompanied by the redemption, transfiguration and glorification of creation. The Second Coming will be not merely the return of His Personal Form to this earth, but it will usher in the transformation and consummation of all things.

In the thirteenth chapter he writes (as paraphrased by Sanday and Headlam) : "The night of this corrupt age is flying. The Parousia is nearing. Cast off your evil ways. Gird yourselves with the armour of light. Take Christ into your hearts. Shun sin and self-indulgence." It is to be noted that in this Epistle Paul still clings to the nearness of Christ's return. This is evident from the sentence—"Now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed." Salvation has here "the transcendent eschatological sense ; it is the final and complete deliverance from sin and death, and the reception into the heavenly kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ." [1] The idea of Christ's bodily reign on earth is absolutely foreign to the thought of Paul. It is nowhere suggested in his Epistles. According to his uniform and unbroken conception the Second Coming is the abolition of the present economy and the ushering in of the eternal order.

[1] Denney, "Ex. Gr. Test.," Vol. II, p. 699.

This thought is brought out very powerfully in the Epistle to the Ephesians. In the opening chapter he writes, "making known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Him unto the dispensation of the fullness of the times, to *sum up* all things in Christ, the things in heaven, and the things upon the earth." This is a reëcho of the great passage in Colossians (i. 16–20): "In Him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth . . . all things were created by Him and for Him . . . and in Him all things consist. It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself . . . whether things on earth, or things in heaven." This reconciliation is already partially effected by Christ's atoning life, His salvation of sinners. It will be fully and finally accomplished when He is revealed in glory and the whole universe shares in His redemptive power.

In the fourth chapter of Ephesians Paul writes, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption." The gift of the Spirit, in addition to cleansing and illumination, seals the human spirit unto the day of Christ. It continually reminds the true believer "of the glorious consummation to which we are destined, and from which every sin is a falling off. The very thought of this perfection, with all its associations of purity and love, should shame us from sin." [1]

In the Epistle to the Colossians, third chapter, Paul writes, "When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with Him be mani-

[1] Barry, "Com. on Ephesians," p. 201.

fested in glory." Those who claim that Paul in his later ministry thought less about the Parousia are clearly mistaken. Yet in the Epistles of the Captivity (Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians) there is an evident weakening of his own expectation to live to see that day. In that great masterpiece, the letter to the Philippians, he is expecting to die and pass to his reward. The hope of Christ's manifestation is placed beyond his own death, yet is none the less sure and certain to come. In fact more than any other document which we have from his hands it is jeweled with references to the Parousia.

After the salutation with which it opens he says, "I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you, always in every supplication of mine on behalf of you all making my supplication with joy, for your fellowship in furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ." But that he did not expect himself to be alive in the flesh is evident from his language in the same chapter, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh,—if this shall bring fruit from my work, then what I shall choose I know not. But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for this is very far better; yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake."

The glorious hope of Christ's appearing had not grown dim, but Paul saw farther into the future. In the second chapter he urges the Philippians so to live as "lights in the world" that he may have whereof to glory in "the day of Christ." In the

third chapter he recurs to the same great theme, "For our citizenship is in heaven, whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself." Christ's Second Coming is synchronous with the resurrection and glorification of the body. This is the plain teaching of Paul.

In the fourth chapter of Philippians he writes, "Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." Interpreted literally this sentence seems to contradict the view that he had given up the hope of seeing the Parousia. But this passage has no personal reference. He is thinking of the Philippians and the certainty of Christ's return in glory. He himself may not live to see it, yea, the probability is that he will not, but yet for the Philippians and in fact for all ages "the Lord is at hand." Lightfoot says, "The expression o Kurios eggus is the Apostle's watchword. In 1 Corinthians xvi. 22 an Aramaic equivalent is given, Maran atha, whence we may infer that it was a familiar form of recognition and warning in the early Church." How comforting to the early Christians, that He, who had died for them, who rose again, would come to receive them unto Himself! With them the Personality of Christ and His Promise outweighed every objection from skepticism and from "science so-called." "And the peace of God, which passeth understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus."

When we turn to the Pastoral Epistles,[1] the last letters penned by Paul, we find the doctrine of the Parousia set forth as clearly as in his other writings. In the last chapter of First Timothy: "I charge thee in the sight of God, who giveth life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession; that thou keep the commandment, without spot, without reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." In the first chapter of Second Timothy he writes: "For which cause I suffer also these things: yet I am not ashamed; for I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day." The form varies—"the day of the Lord," "the day of Christ," but to the minds of the early Christians "that day" meant the Parousia. In the third chapter he writes, "But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof: from these also turn away." It is evident from these warnings that Paul thought it possible for Timothy to be a witness of "the last days," yet he dares not define that hour which the Son of God had left uncertain.

[1] Those who have doubts as to the authenticity of these Epistles may consult with profit the Introductions by Salmon, Zahn, the Pauline Epistles by Shaw, and especially Findlay in the appendix to Sabatier's "Apostle Paul."

And the note of patient waiting, which we saw in Second Thessalonians, we find here combined with the solemn preparation for the last Judgment: "I charge thee in the sight of God and of Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn aside from the truth, and turn aside unto fables."

In the Epistle to Titus he writes, "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation unto all men, instructing us, to the intent that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." With almost his dying breath Paul affirmed his unshaken conviction as to the Second Coming of Christ. No doubt of the final manifestation of Him, who had first appeared to him on the Damascus road, seems ever to have crossed his mind. To him the Parousia was the promised goal of life and history, the consummation of all things, the transfiguration and coronation of creation in Jesus Christ.

The Answer of James

By many scholars the Epistle of James is considered the first of the New Testament books in point of time. The absence of reference to later controversies places it very early in the Apostolic age. "Without any ex-

tended discussion or argument, James shows that he has a vital grasp of the truth, in language which in forcibleness is without parallel in early Christian literature, excepting the discourses of Jesus. . . . Its genuinely Israelitish character, and the absence from it of that ecclesiastical language with which we are so familiar, and which was a development out of the Pauline gospel, are the strongest possible proofs of the correctness of the interpretation which led us to assign the letter to a time prior to the apostolic council, and of the truthfulness of the tradition which ascribes its composition to James of Jerusalem."[1] In this Epistle we have the words of one who knew intimately the Founder of the Christian Faith. He writes: "Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it, until it receive the early and the latter rain. Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord is at hand." James evidently believed the "visible presence" (parousia) to be imminent, ye he dared not make any prediction and counselled his readers to be "long-tempered," since "the preciousness of the fruit justifies waiting."[2] And this principle is of application for any period of time. When the harvest of the world is fully ripe then cometh the end, but not until then.

The Answer of Peter

There has never been much doubt as to the genuineness and authenticity of the First Epistle of Peter.

[1] Zahn, "Introduction," Vol. I, pp. 111, 143.
[2] Mayor, "Commentary," p. 156.

"Eusebius places it among the Omologoumena, or books which were accepted by the whole Church without any feeling of doubt. There is no book in the New Testament which has earlier, better, or stronger attestation, though Irenæus is the first to quote it by name." That the author was St. Peter, a personal disciple of Jesus Christ, is admitted by most scholars, though Zahn considers it the work of an interpreter. He argues that Silvanus, a man of high esteem in the early Church, assisted Peter, and in all probability wrote this letter at his dictation, Peter furnishing the ideas and Silvanus reworking them to suit the needs of those to whom it was addressed, but Chase strongly opposes this and contends that it was written in all probability by Peter himself.[1]

The Apostle Peter was peculiarly fitted to bear witness to the teachings of Jesus. He had been one of His first disciples, had been the first to bear witness to His Divinity, had been selected by Jesus as the natural spokesman of the Apostolic company, combining the gifts of quick faith and ready speech, had followed the Master until his own arrest in the courtyard of Pilate, and after his denial had been restored to full fellowship by the Risen Christ. Even with all his human limitations he cannot have been wholly mistaken as to the chief points of the Master's teachings.

In the opening chapter he writes:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled,

[1] D. B., Vol. III, p. 790.

and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is tried by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honour at the appearance of Jesus Christ."

The word here translated "appearance" is the same as "apocalypse" and signifies the disclosure or manifestation of a person or thing previously hidden or veiled. How blessed and necessary must have been the hope of Christ's Coming to the believers of that age! Surrounded by a hostile world, persecuted and afflicted, they were upborne by the sure promise that He would come again in power and glory. "Wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope on the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." So St. Peter writes in the first chapter. In the fourth he returns to the same great theme: "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore of sound mind, and be sober unto prayer." It is evident that he was looking for and expecting an early dissolution of the present order. Again he says: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial among you, which cometh upon you to prove you, as though strange things had happened unto you: but insomuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice; that at the manifestation of His glory also ye may rejoice with exceeding joy."

The Second Epistle of Peter has been so much of a shuttle-cock between critics, some defending and some

opposing its authenticity, that we introduce it only as collateral evidence to show how strong and unbroken was the belief in the Parousia. Those who think that the case has been proven against its genuineness should read Salmon's chapter on the question in his Introduction. It is an illustration of how one of the most powerful minds in the last century, one an expert in another field of high thinking, completely pulverizes many of the contentions of able criticism against the Epistle. And when we add to his successful turning of the front of adverse criticism the arguments of Warfield, Bigg and Zahn it may be said that the Second Epistle still holds its place in the New Testament Canon. I think that Salmon has successfully shown that the letter was not far removed in time from the First. If the author was not Peter he was a pious forger. But what forger would dare to use such language as this:

"And I think it right, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that the putting off of my tabernacle cometh swiftly, even as our Lord Jesus Christ signified to me."

If the writer was St. Peter it is evident that he has abandoned the idea of living unto the Parousia. But that there was no lessening of belief in "that day" is seen in the second chapter:

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment."

In the third chapter he writes:

"This is now, beloved, the second epistle that I write unto you; and in both of them I stir up your sincere mind by putting you in remembrance; that ye should remember the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Saviour through your apostles: knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

It has been objected against the Petrine authorship that the phrase "from the day the fathers fell asleep" could not have been used by an Apostle, but the words "the fathers" may refer as well to the Hebrew fathers as to the personal followers of Jesus. He is simply citing the long continuity of the present order as one objection against its dissolution, which is also a very common argument to-day!

"But the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been *stored with fire*, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men."

The complete revolution in the last ten years in the attitude of physicists towards the composition of the physical universe affords a striking commentary on this passage. The researches of Madame Curie and others have shown the physical universe to be stored with fire or rather containing hitherto unknown substances pregnant with mighty energies, easily convertible into heat and fire. It is asserted on high authority that if the radium in the earth should vibrate at a much higher rate than at present marks it, the present earth would suddenly be blotted out by fire!

"But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is long-suffering to youward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

We find here the same tendency to correct the expectation of the immediacy of the Parousia which we found in the later Pauline Epistles. It is not improbable that when Paul and Peter were together for a time in the closing years of their lives, they discussed the whole question of the Second Advent and agreed that the day of His appearing must be left where the Lord had placed it—in the wisdom and knowledge of the Father.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein shall be burned. Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

"But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

The Answer of Jude

The majority of Christian scholars are agreed that this Epistle was written by Jude, a brother of our Lord. It is well attested in the second century. Its language betrays knowledge of the Septuagint, acquaintance with Paul's writings, and a very strong

literary affinity for Second Peter. The question of its relation to Second Peter has been much debated. Chase and others argue for the priority of Jude, while Spitta and Zahn defend the priority of Second Peter. It is now generally agreed that it was written somewhere between 65 and 80 A. D. It is a strong witness for the genuineness of the Parousia teachings of Christ, even though it is tinctured with Jewish apocalyptic ideas drawn from the Book of Enoch and probably also from the Assumption of Moses. He says:

"But ye, beloved, remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; that they said to you, In the last time there shall be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts. These are they who make separations, sensual, having not the Spirit. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

Then follows one of the noblest passages in the entire New Testament:

"Now unto him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before *the presence* of his glory without blemish in exceeding joy, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, before all time, and now, and unto all the ages. Amen."

The Answer of Hebrews

Origen said of the authorship of this Epistle: "Who wrote this Epistle, God alone knows." And in spite of much speculation, veering from Aquilla to

Barnabas, and even to Priscilla, we are not likely to get beyond the conclusion of the great Alexandrian Father. The late Professor Bruce has well said,

> "We must be content to remain in ignorance as to the writer of this remarkable work. Nor should we find this difficult. Some of the greatest books in the Bible, such as Job and the second part of Isaiah, are anonymous writings. It is meet that this one should belong to this number, for it bears witness in its opening sentence to One who speaks God's final word to men. In presence of the Son, what does it matter who points the way to him? The witness-bearer does not desire to be known. He bids us listen to Jesus and then retires into the background. We need have no anxiety about finding for this work an apostolic author who shall guarantee its inspiration and canonicity. The book speaks for itself. It is worthy to be in the New Testament. It rendered an indispensable service to faith in a transition time when an old world was passing away and a new world was coming into being."

It is well-nigh agreed that it was written in a period of transition. Bruce, following Rendall, would place its composition about 70 A. D., just before the destruction of the Temple. Zahn thinks it was written about 80. But the exact date matters little. It was a document for a sorely troubled time. The Jewish world was passing away; a new conception of history had to be formed. The Levitical language used tends to obscure the broad philosophy underlying this great Epistle, but it is there on a scale scarcely surpassed by any other book in the New Testament. And it would be well if those who are writing on the Atonement in these days would first make a profound study of this letter to the Hebrews. There are hints there that in the depths of the Divine nature there is

a vast process of atonement of which the Son is the source and the sacrifice. The creation of a universe of free spirits placed the Godhead under the necessity of providing an atonement. This atoning process originates in the very heart of God and flows out through all creation, yet has its centre and ultimate sacrifice and saving power in the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself."

This Epistle also enforces a solemn truth which our age seems inclined to forget, that the reverse side of atonement is judgment. Infinite Love offers full pardon and redemption to all, but upon those who refuse to share in the atoning life which issues from God there must fall the judgment and the doom of death. Therefore the author of Hebrews, after discussing the vast process of redemption brought to completion by Christ, by His sacrificial death, resurrection and entrance within the vail, says,

> "But now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this *cometh* judgment; so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation."

There are other allusions to the Second Coming but this one quotation is sufficient to show that the author of Hebrews held strongly the Apostolic faith concerning Christ's visible return. It was a sure tradition which he had received from the lips of men who had heard Christ in the flesh. Not only was it

a sure tradition but it complemented those deep implications of faith, which, as illustrated in the lives of the Jewish worthies, confessed its heart-hunger for a more perfect world. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking a country of their own . . . wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city." And towards the close of this great Epistle we read, "For we have not here an abiding city, but we seek after the city which is to come."

In the twelfth chapter there is this warning: "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not when they refused Him that warned them on the earth, much more shall we not escape who turn away from Him that warneth from heaven; whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more will I make to tremble not the earth only, but also the heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, that those things which are not shaken may remain." This passage plainly teaches that there is coming a time when the whole universe shall undergo a vast convulsion or change. In this "shaking" everything of a finite nature shall pass away, leaving the permanent, the indestructible, the eternal. These words would seem to teach that behind present physical phenomena there are things which cannot be shaken. The soul of man, when redeemed by Christ,

is one of these indestructible realities, and according to the Epistle to the Hebrews has a place in an eternal world fully revealed in the final apocalypse of Christ.

We have now examined the teachings of Paul, Peter, James, Jude, and the unknown author of Hebrews, and have found one invariable and unbroken agreement in reference to the doctrine of Christ's visible return. They all hold it imminent yet dare not dogmatize as to the time, and along with the constant exhortation to be ready they inculcate the grace of patient waiting. Nor is there, as is claimed by some, the least trace of evolution in this doctrine. As we saw in our study of Paul's letters his last epistles are jewelled with references to the Parousia. If we shall find this common and harmonious doctrine of the Epistles confirmed by the Synoptic record and the writings of John, then we ought to be able to go into any court of evidence in Christendom and demand that judgment be entered against those who contend that the doctrine of the Second Coming originated not with Christ but with the Apostles. So far we have shown the existence of a strong, persistent, and unmodified tradition as to His teachings on this subject.

II

THE ANSWER OF THE SYNOPTIC RECORD

The Origin of the Gospels

FOR many years there has been a keen debate as to the origin of the four documents which enshrine the words and acts of Jesus. Some of the questions at issue are unsettled and in all probability a few of them can never be solved. But this fact ought to give the Church joy rather than fear. For it is a guarantee that for the time to come these precious documents will hold the focused gaze of the world's best scholarship.

Out of the mists of controversy some definite conclusions are beginning to emerge. One of the most important is the conclusion of Harnack that the Third Gospel and the Book of Acts were written by a companion of the Apostle Paul, and that this fellow traveller was a physician.[1] This person could have been none other than Luke, as the Church has always believed. Another conclusion regarded by most scholars as established is that Matthew prepared in the Aramaic tongue a collection of the sayings of Jesus, though the relation of this Logia to the present Gospel of Matthew is a matter of grave debate. We shall discuss this later. But the fact that Matthew did prepare such a collection is in accord with the

[1] "Luke the Physician."

earliest authentic tradition, that of Papias, which is preserved for us in the history of Eusebius. Papias lived in the early part of the second century and was acquainted with the presbyter John, who was familiar with the Apostolic tradition. Eusebius says, "Papias himself in the preface to his discourses by no means declares that he was himself a hearer and eye-witness of the holy apostles, but he shows by the words which he uses that he received the doctrines of the faith from those who were their friends." As to Matthew, Papias writes as follows: "So then Matthew wrote the sayings in the Hebrew language, and every one interpreted them as he was able." This statement is of profound importance in any solution of the Synoptic problem, *i. e.*, the relation of Matthew, Mark and Luke to each other.

Now it is held by the great majority of scholars that, "after fifteen or twenty years of circulating and transmitting the utterances of Jesus by word of mouth, the Gospel Memorabilia were gradually put into writing."[1] We have a hint of this in Luke's foreword to his Gospel. And what could be more natural than that Matthew, a former tax-gatherer, one whose calling had fitted him for writing, should be one of the first to jot down the sayings of Jesus. As the Apostles were expecting the early return of their Lord there seemed to be no necessity for a formal history of His life and teaching. But as time wore away and the Letters of Paul and others began to appear there would arise the demand for a more definite account of the earthly life of Jesus. This was soon supplied in the Gospel of Mark. Of this Gospel

[1] D. B., Ex. Vol., p. 5.

Papias says, "Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately, though not indeed in order, whatsoever he remembered of the things said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed Him, but afterwards, as I said, he followed Peter, who adapted his teachings to the needs of his hearers, but with no intention of giving a connected account of the Lord's discourses, so that Mark committed no error while he thus wrote some things as he remembered them. For he was careful of one thing, not to omit any of the things which he had heard, and not to state any of them falsely." This last sentence contains the key-note of the Synoptic problem, to which we now address ourselves.

The Synoptic Problem

This is a large question and one that we can touch only in outline. Yet some understanding of it is absolutely necessary before we can proceed further. According to the arrangement in Swete's commentary there are one hundred and six sections in the genuine St. Mark, and of these "there are but four (excluding the head-line) which are wholly absent from both St. Matthew and St. Luke; and of the remaining one hundred and one, ninety-three are to be found in St. Matthew, and eighty-one in St. Luke. On the other hand, as the table shows with equal distinctness, there are large portions of St. Matthew and St. Luke (*e. g.*, Matt. i.–ii., v.–vii., Luke i.–ii., ix. 51–xviii. 14) which are either entirely wanting in St. Mark, or represented there only by an occasional fragment." If we confine our attention to the material in which the three agree we find that Matthew and Luke fol-

low with remarkable fidelity the order of Mark. Inasmuch as this matter in Mark is marked by qualities which betoken the touch of an eye-witness, it is not difficult to understand why the majority of modern scholars assign Mark priority over the first and third Gospels as they now stand.

It is also evident that the authors of the first and third Gospels made large use of Mark in compiling their account. The theory of an oral tradition lying at the root of all three has a measure of truth in it, yet it is not sufficient to explain the marked dependence of Matthew and Luke on Mark. The authors of the first and third Gospels must have had before them this short, graphic, autoptic Gospel which bears the name of Barnabas's nephew. As to the origin of the larger and differing material in Matthew and Luke no satisfactory hypothesis has been framed. Just now many scholars are inclined to postulate the existence of a second common source or document now lost, which they designate by the symbol "Q." Several attempts have been made, notably that of Harnack, to outline the matter once contained in "Q," but it cannot be said that these attempts can be pronounced successful. While helpful in the study of New Testament problems they can never reach finality. The problem of the origin of the New Testament is more than a problem of literary criticism. It is the problem of the manifestation and expression of the most tremendous life this earth has known. Hence any satisfactory hypothesis must include all lines of approach—linguistics, literary criticism, science of religion, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and that final court of appeal—the spirit of man.

Did Matthew rewrite his "Oracles of Jesus," or did some later editor taking this work as a basis re-edit it in the light of Mark and other material? We know not. Yet this is true of Matthew's Gospel. We have in it, in all probability, a more correct account of Christ's discourses as spoken than in the other Synoptics. The author seems to have been at much pains to reproduce the actual words of our Lord. "Hence in style and feeling Matthew will be something nearer the original. It is doubtless a subconscious recognition of this that has tended to make alike critics and the instinctive feeling of the ordinary Christian look preëminently to the Gospel of St. Matthew for the subtler atmosphere of the Master's teaching." [1]

Despite their differences there is one great dominating note running through the Synoptic Gospels—an earnest and painstaking desire to convey the truth concerning Jesus just as each received it or was able to gather it. Luke plainly declares that this was his intention—"to trace the course of all things accurately from the first." It is this fact, the evident sincerity and truthfulness breathing through all our Gospels, which make them so unspeakably precious to us. We know that wherein they differ they differ honestly. Each author is seeking to portray facts from the sacred biography, and when he is convinced of the correctness of any saying or deed he puts it down without attempting to harmonize it with the records of the other evangelists. Hence all absence of collusion. In reading these records we feel that we are in the very atmosphere of truth. Though a few state-

[1] "Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem," p. 208.

ments present a different perspective, yet the discrepancies are so minor that they but enhance the general reality of the whole picture. In the words of one who is an authority in this field, "We may inquire whether there is, or is not, amid all differences an essential inner agreement, or at least compatibility; whether the several representations of our Lord's Person and Life in them do not give in combination an image marked by unity and completeness. If we can trace in Gospels such a harmony, we shall have herein the best guarantee that we could desire of their historical truth, and shall derive therefrom the noblest conception that could be formed of the common inspiration of their fourfold testimony."[1]

The Gospels were providential plantings in a time of Divine Life. The seed was scattered broadcast o'er the earth and four prepared souls brought it to bloom in different fashion, but the sweet odour and its healing power are the same. We need not waste time worrying about outward divergence. When we consider how frail the hands and finite the minds through which they came, rather should we marvel at the vast amount of Divine Life and Light which these documents contain. The telescope reveals spots on the sun. These are due, according to latest observers, "to certain local differences of constitution, temperature, and pressure." When the sun is storm-swept its immense mass, temperature, and pressure, produce these local disturbances which appear relatively dark. When we pause to think of how much light and life was surging through the Son of Righteousness we need not be surprised that the finite men

[1] Stanton, in D. B., Vol. II, p. 249.

who surrounded Him were profoundly disturbed in their inner consciousness and that the pulsation of the light of God through these human photospheres could not be otherwise than slightly divergent.

Reserving all questions as to the Fourth Gospel until we reach it, we now proceed to examine the teachings of the Synoptics in the order of their origin.

The Answer of Mark

It is the full and unanimous testimony of the early Church that this Gospel was written by John Mark, a nephew of Barnabas. Nor has modern criticism been able to disturb this tradition. Irenæus, a disciple of Polycarp, who knew John the Apostle, says, "Matthew published his Gospel among the Hebrews in their own language, while Peter and Paul were preaching and founding the church in Rome. After their departure (*i. e.*, their death) Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also transmitted to us in writing the things which Peter had preached; and Luke, the attendant of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel which Paul had declared." [1] That Mark has preserved what comprised in outline the teaching and preaching of the Apostle Peter seems borne out by the account given of Peter in the other Gospels. He was a man of deeds and we find this Gospel confining itself almost entirely to the acts of Jesus. It bears on its face the impress of an eye-witness, one who saw at a glance the vivid aspect of each scene. As Westcott has said, "In substance and style and treatment the Gospel of St. Mark is essentially a transcript from life. The course and issue of facts

[1] "Eusebius," Bk. V, Chap. viii.

are imaged in it with the clearest outline. If all other arguments against the mythic origin of the Evangelical narratives were wanting, this vivid and simple record, stamped with the most distinct impress of independence and originality, totally unconnected with the symbolism of the Old Dispensation, totally independent of the deeper reasonings of the New, would be sufficient to refute a theory subversive of all faith in history."

The date of this Gospel from tradition and internal considerations is probably somewhere between 65 A. D. and the fall of Jerusalem. The only extended discourses in it are those referring to Christ's Second Coming. It has been objected by some that this fact vitiates the record inasmuch as these parts are not in keeping with the rest of the Gospel, and hence are not authentic sayings of Jesus but Jewish apocalyptic discourses interpolated. But such criticism loses sight of the fact that had it not been for the hope held out in these discourses there would have been no necessity for the rest of the Gospel. For as B. Weiss has pointed out, "It was manifestly the delay of the Second Coming of Jesus, expected immediately on the ground of expressions like ix. 1, which led to the search in His earthly life, apart altogether from this last decisive proof of His Redeemership, for those elements which might afford a guarantee of it for combating pressing doubt, and for strengthening anew the certainty of His second coming." [1] If the Son of Man was not to be manifested to reward those who had entered into His tribulation what was the use of any Gospel at all? "Where

[1] "Life of Christ," Vol. I, p. 52.

there is no vision the people die." Whatever the truth concerning the Second Advent only the hope of a Personal Return would satisfy the religious consciousness of the first century. The rainbow of Hope springing out of the empty Easter tomb had arched itself forward towards His Return. Remove either objective and the prismatic and inspiring glory collapsed into utter darkness. Hence we find the promise of Christ's return lying at the very heart of Mark's Gospel.

In the eighth chapter we read,

> "And he called unto him the multitude with the disciples, and said unto them, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it. For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man also shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (34–38).

This is a plain prediction of a glorious personal return. The fact that He is accompanied by the hosts of heaven prevents its reference to an unseen spiritual return or to the fall of Jerusalem. That Jesus did teach that He would personally return in glory to judge mankind and to reward His followers has been admitted by even ruthless criticism. Charles, who is an acknowledged and advanced authority in this field, says, "The doctrine of His return at an unlooked hour goes back undoubtedly to Christ. It

belongs to the various contexts in which it occurs, and it forms the motive of several of the undisputed parables." [1]

Those who argue for the fulfillment of the Parousia prophecies in the destruction of Jerusalem cite Mark ix. 1, "There be some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste death, till they see the Kingdom of God come with power." These words were in all probability spoken in connection with the discourse quoted above, yet it does not necessarily have the same objective. Christ had a way of proving the great and far event by the fact of the near manifestation. There is a vast difference between the Son of Man coming with the holy angels and the Kingdom of God coming with power, yet the one is the promise of the other. Some of the disciples saw the Kingdom in promise a few days later when Jesus was transfigured; they saw it mightily in the rapture and power of Pentecost, and those who were alive at the fall of Jerusalem saw in that terrible catastrophe the destruction of the old economy and the setting of the new. It is true that the parallel in Matthew is slightly different but we shall examine that when we reach it.

When we come to the apocalyptic utterances recorded in the thirteenth chapter we enter a field of fierce controversy. Before we consider them it is needful to get some conception of the consciousness of Christ. It is true that there are depths in His Personality which no mortal plummet can ever sound. Yet a close study of the Gospels reveals attitudes of mind that are not without help and significance for

[1] "Eschatology," p. 323.

us. We learn from these attitudes that His human consciousness was a development, that as the Son of Man He was learning the way of redemption for His brethren. Of most things He had a clear vision; of a few He professed a present ignorance. We can understand why His consciousness, bearing the weight of the world's sin, should not have been loaded down with any unnecessary knowledge. His prophetic vision arose largely from His moral and spiritual perceptions and intuitions. There is a spiritual universe enwrapping the natural world and dominating it, and so His grasp upon the forces in the moral universe enabled Him with the assistance of the ever-present Spirit to see in rough outline the clash and triumph of spiritual forces on the field of history.

Again Jesus believed implicitly in the general moral perceptions of Judaism. As yet we have had no adequate explanation of the Jewish religious consciousness. There are depths there that have never been explored. More and more the spiritual history of the Jews is being seen as the working and product of a vast evolutionary movement as profound as that which has been observed in the natural world. A recent writer has stated this very clearly and powerfully:

"There is no gulf between the Old Testament and the New. As we read its pages, we are still looking into the great organism of occult force which, along with its upward evolution, has here and there degenerated and gone to seed in witchcraft, demonism, and resulting forms of nervous disease. The heads of the nation have departed from the pathway of faith, and have led the people into lifeless dogmas and traditions, while at the same time they have

clung to their hypnotic phenomena. The threatened judgment of Jehovah has come upon them,—they are heavily chastened. Furthermore the mightiest of all the prophets has arisen in this hour of all extremity and profoundly touched the conscience of the nation. The true pyschic element in the Hebrew stock has meanwhile not lost ground. It has been refined and purified for a nobler work. We see it flashing forth here and there in visions like those of Simeon, Anna, and John the Baptist, or welling up into prophetic psalmody as in the case of Zachariah and Elizabeth, and in the so-called Magnificat of Mary the mother of Jesus. . . . The birth of Jesus is not the mere coming into the world of an individual human being; it is a revelation,—the climacteric of a revelatory and formative organism in which both the divine and human psychism had been stored up age after age for the purpose of the Holy Ghost; it is the lifting up of the divine drama into its final and personal form; it is the beginning of the last revelation of God to man, and this the heart of humanity has vaguely but powerfully felt."[1]

Jesus on His human side drank deeply from the fountain of Hebrew religion. He accepted and believed its general attitude and communion with the eternal order. In His teachings He used ideas and figures of speech which had become part and parcel of the Jewish consciousness. Yet He immeasurably uplifted these ideas and shot into them a richness and fullness of content they had never possessed. This was especially true of the Messianic hopes of Israel. In the conflict with a sinful world the prophets were compelled to posit a Day of Jehovah. The moral order of the world demanded a manifestation of Right victorious over Wrong. As the nation became more oppressed these apocalyptic ideas became more in-

[1] Denison, "Christ's Idea of the Supernatural," pp. 299–300.

tense and even fantastic. When Jesus was born they had degenerated largely into material conceptions of an earthly reign of the Messianic King. It was evident that He would use whatever was noble and true in the hopes of His people, yet it is also evident that as the founder of a world-wide religion He must construct an apocalyptic that would include the hopes of all mankind and square with the demands of the world order. We see these universal elements fermenting in the minds of the Apostles. In some we see the new wine fermenting on the surface of the old, straining the human bottles even to breaking. When He bade them good-bye He said, "I have many things to say unto you but ye are not able to bear them now." In one only, John the beloved, and then only in his old age does the new leaven seem to have accomplished its perfect work.

With these considerations in mind we approach the prophecies as to the Second Coming in the thirteenth chapter of Mark. According to this evangelist, one day, during Passion Week, Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives with Jerusalem lying out before Him. That same day as He had gone out of the Temple one of His disciples said unto Him, "Teacher, behold, what manner of stones and what manner of buildings!" And Jesus said unto him, "Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left here one stone upon another, which shall not be thrown down." And now as they sat upon the side of the mount Peter, James, John and Andrew privately ask Him, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when these things are all about to be accomplished?" And Jesus began to say unto them,

"Take heed that no man lead you astray. Many shall come in my name, saying, I am he; and shall lead many astray. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of war be not troubled: these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there shall be earthquakes in divers places; there shall be famines: these things are the beginning of sorrow (xiii. 5–8).

"But take ye heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in synagogues shall ye be beaten; and before governors and kings shall ye stand for my sake, for a testimony unto them. And the gospel first must be preached unto all the nations. And when they lead you to judgment, and deliver you up, be not anxious beforehand what ye shall speak: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is not ye that speak but the Holy Spirit. And brother shall deliver brother to death, and the father his child; and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved (xiii. 9–13).

"But when ye see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not (let him that readeth understand), then let them that are in Judæa flee unto the mountains: and let him that is on the housetop not go down, nor enter in, to take anything out of his house: and let him that is in the field not return back to take his cloak. But woe unto them that are with child and unto them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that it be not in the winter. For those days shall be tribulation, such as there hath not been the like from the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never shall be. And except the Lord had shortened the days, no flesh would have been saved; but for the elect's sake, whom he chose, he shortened the days (xiii. 14–20).

"And then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ; or, Lo, there, believe it not: for there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show signs and wonders, that they may lead astray, if possible, the

elect. But take ye heed: behold, I have told you all things beforehand (xiii. 21–23).

"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall not give her light, and the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send forth his angels, and shall gather his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven (xiii. 24–27).

"Now from the fig tree learn her parable: when her branch is now become tender, and putteth forth its leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh; even so ye also, when ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that he is nigh, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, until all things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son but the Father (xiii. 28–32).

"Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. It is as when a man sojourning in another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded the porter to watch. Watch therefore: for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (xiii. 33–37).

According to Mark's account this important discourse was spoken to four disciples, one of whom was Peter. As Mark was undoubtedly Peter's interpreter or amanuensis we have strong evidence as to the genuineness of the "Sayings" here recorded. There is a school of scholars who would see in these passages evidence of a Jewish apocalypse worked into the sayings of Jesus. But of this there is neither historical nor tex-

tual proof. That Jesus took unto Himself the Messianic hopes of Israel is beyond controversy. The use of the terms "abomination of desolation" and "Son of Man" show how deeply His mind was saturated with the great prophetic ideas of His people. Setting aside the carnal and fantastic apocalyptics of His time He uses the circle of ideas which have large place in the books of Daniel and the Ethiopic Enoch. He did this because any other medium would have been futile. Had He spoken in absolutely new symbols the divine truth would have been wasted on His followers. He took the hopes of Israel at their best and highest and made them the vehicle for vast spiritual meanings. "The abomination of desolation" plainly refers to the Roman occupancy and profanation of the Temple. As to the title "Son of Man" there has been much controversy, but Charles, we think, has clearly demonstrated in answer to Wellhausen and others that "in the Ethiopic expression 'Son of Man' we have a Messianic title, and that this expression represents the Greek *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*." [1] The Ethiopic Enoch seems to be a composite work composed in the second and third century before Christ. There is a marked development or evolution of eschatological ideas between its first and later chapters. In the first portion of the book the scene of the Messiah's kingdom is to be on earth, but later the seer sees that the evils and imperfections of this present world render it unfit for the centre of such a kingdom and so the thought rises to the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven.[2] Chapters xxxvii.–lxx.

[1] "Eschatology," p. 215.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 215.

are known as the "Similitudes." According to Charles "it stands alone among Jewish apocalyptic writings. Thus, though all other writers of this and the next century abandoned the Old Testament idea of an everlasting Messianic kingdom, the author of the Similitudes clings fast to this hope. The scene of this kingdom, indeed, was not to be the present earth, but a new heavens and a new earth (xlv. 4, 5); for, owing to the prevalent dualism, such a conception had already become impossible. Thus the writer for the last time in Judaism combines in one blessed future the separate hopes of the individual and the nation, and thus unites in a high spiritual synthesis the severed eschatologies."

Those who compare the apocalypse of Jesus with the prophecies of the "Similitudes" may be surprised at the close resemblance between the Parousia of the Son of Man as portrayed by both, and at first thought inclined to give some credence to the contention that the eschatological discourses of Jesus are not genuine but interpolated from such a source. But closer study will reveal the fact that the noblest of Jewish apocalypses are here reworked and given reality by the greatest personality that has ever lived among men. We see here at work the vast law of development, a thorough providential preparation for the manifestation of the Christ. As Greek thought was a providential preparation for the theology of the Church so Jewish prophecy was a divine preparation for the apocalyptic in Christ's teachings.

Jesus, as has been observed, was no isolated phenomenon. He sprang out of Jewish soil, gathering up all that was noblest and best in that divine his-

tory, and yet by virtue of a Sonship, which is unique and inexplicable, transmuting the message of Judaism until it becomes a spiritual language for all humanity. We do not explain Him when we trace in Him the deepest and noblest currents of Jewish thought. We explain them by finding in Him their culmination and fulfillment. Without Him they would have died amid the wastes of history. Judaism itself has survived only where His shadow falls. In the logic of "ends" we find the sole adequate explanation of all phenomena. As a doctrine of "last things" must be a necessary part of every sound religious system, arising out of the contrast between the actual world order and that which ought to be, its absence from the Christian system would have wrecked its claim to finality. Engaged in establishing a vast spiritual empire, whose corner-stone was to be His sacrificial death, the teachings of Christ must necessarily end in eschatology. Hence our task is to find out the content of the Christian apocalyptic, and to test it by the facts of present knowledge.

In order to understand something of the meaning of this great apocalypse we must remember that these words were spoken just three days before His crucifixion. The shadows of that terrible agony, with all its attendant suffering, physical and mental, were beginning to steal over His spirit. Hence we may expect the undertone of all His thinking at this time to be His final triumph. The destruction of Jerusalem, all-important as it might seem to His disciples, would be to Him but a terrible incident in the movement towards that triumph. A careful study of this discourse reveals this to be true. Its goal is not the de-

struction of the city but "that Day" in which the Son of Man shall be revealed in glory. This is evident from warnings uttered at the beginning and at the close. "Many shall come in My name, saying, I am he; and shall lead many astray." "And if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ; or lo, there, believe it not." "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." "And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." An event so clearly foreseen by Him as was the destruction of Jerusalem could not have been the sole burden of such prophecies.

The first three verses describe in a general way "the beginnings of sorrow." They were anticipated in the events preceding the fall of Jerusalem and will be reduplicated in the pangs ushering in the Second Advent. So closely interwoven is the destruction of Jerusalem with the end of all things that it is difficult to separate the prophecies. That they were in thought closely associated in the mind of Christ, so that the one symbolizes the other, is plain, yet it would seem as if the disciples at that time were unable to distinguish them, and had it not been for their desire to record Christ's words regardless of harmony, in all probability we would have had a discourse in which the destruction of the city was made the end. And there have been scholars who have argued that the Parousia, properly interpreted, was synchronous with the fall of Jerusalem. But not only will this discourse fail to support such an idea, but other passages absolutely negative it.

In all probability the only verses which refer to the

destruction of Jerusalem are six—from 14 to 20. We know how fully and terribly these were fulfilled. Coincident with the fall of the city false Christs would arise (21–23). But other things must happen before the Son of Man would appear. "In those days, after that tribulation the sun shall be darkened." How long after? Matthew seems to place it "immediately after," but his words need to be studied in their own setting. Mark makes an interval but does not measure it. Meyer contended that Mark posited a close relation in time, yet his error has been pointed out by Baur, Hilgenfeld, Bruce and Swete. In Luke there is no note of time.

It is contended by a few scholars that Jesus predicted His return shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem, and was therefore Himself mistaken as to the time. If we confine ourselves to the record in Mark and Luke we find no sound basis for such a contention. It is true that the passage, "This generation shall not pass away until all things be accomplished," has been a crux to interpreters. One eminent scholar has said that he wished it was not in the record. The effort to stretch out "generation" so as to include the entire Christian dispensation has failed, though Swete says, "It is possible that a word was purposely employed which was capable of being understood in a narrower or a wider sense, according to the interpretation assigned to the passage by the hearer or reader." But this is scarcely satisfactory. We have to conclude that either the disciples misunderstood Jesus here, or that "all these things" refer specifically to events connected with the fall of Jerusalem. The question asked by the disciples re-

ferred to "these things" *i. e.*, the destruction of the Temple. Jesus answered with a wider outlook on the end of all things, though the end of the Jewish economy is not overlooked. In fact "these things" and "that day" seem to be the two goals about which the prophecy moves. Beet says, "The colourless rendering 'that day' poorly reproduces the emphasis of the Greek pronoun, ἐκείνης, which points conspicuously to something at a distance from the speaker." Two days later in the upper room at the close of the Last Supper He said, "Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day that I drink it fresh in the kingdom of God." "These things" must be clearly distinguished from "that day." The one is a manifestation in human history of the Roman power and the collapse of the Jewish economy; the other is the consummation of *all things* when the Risen Christ shall finally breathe the aroma and drink deep of the commingled love of that vast brotherhood which He died to create. And so it is likely that as He sat on the mount with His disciples He waved His hand towards Jerusalem and the glistening Temple, saying, "This generation shall not pass away until all *these* things take place." And then He may have pointed to the heavens and have said, "But of *that day and hour* knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

This explanation may not be entirely satisfactory, yet surely it is more plausible than the theories which assume a Jewish-Christian apocalypse of human origin or that Jesus was mistaken as to the time of His coming. And such an interpretation is in keeping with the truth enunciated by Lord Bacon when he

declared that "prophecy has a springing and germinant fulfillment throughout all time." A recent writer says,

> "This undoubtedly is the key to all sound prophetic interpretation, particularly of Christ's eschatological teachings. He is suddenly asked by his disciples when Jerusalem will be destroyed, and what shall be the sign of his coming and of the end of the world. It was a question concerning a fact of infinite complexity. His answer shows clearly a purpose not to convey to them, even if he knew it, the day or the hour of the final climacteric, but to plant in their minds the seeds of a larger idea, namely, how this process of spiritual evolution, revelation, and judgment, with himself as its stem, must repeat itself in every age and in every life, as well as in the larger cycle of the cosmos. So while he declares that 'the times of the nations must first be fulfilled,' thus clearly pointing out a vast diameter, he likewise adds, '*this generation* shall not pass till all these be fulfilled,' so indicating the narrower cycle of fulfillment with its diameter of a single human life, and its practical lesson, 'Be ye also ready.'" [1]

In interpreting the words of Jesus in reference to "the future," we must remember that the language used is highly figurative. We have seen that He was compelled to use symbolic language because of the limitations of His disciples, because of the limitations of all men to the end of time. Sanday has well said, "It will be obvious that symbolism is specially in place when it is used to describe that which it is difficult or impossible to describe directly; such as the nature of God or of spiritual things, of which the mind cannot form any picture as they really are, but can at most suggest them." [2] But it must not be

[1] Denison, "Christ's Idea of the Supernatural," pp. 201–202.

[2] "The Life of Christ in Recent Research," p. 4.

concluded that there is no profound relation between the truth symbolized and the symbol. Properly interpreted the whole physical universe is a symbol of spiritual truths, an adumbration of things behind the vail. And one measure of religious genius is its ability to perceive and interpret this correspondence.

In the case of Christ the whole correspondence was known. Let us never forget this. Hence the language used by Him is of immense significance. With all our insight and philosophical ingenuity we can never exhaust their content. While always placing supreme emphasis on the spiritual meaning we must not lose sight of its physical implications. Swete commenting on the portents accompanying or preceding Christ's Return says,

> "The symbolical description is gathered from Old Testament predictions of the ruin of nations hostile to Israel. . . . In all these cases physical phenomena are used to describe the upheaval of dynasties, or great moral and spiritual changes; and it is unnecessary to exact any other meaning from the words when they are adopted by Christ. The centuries which followed the fall of Jerusalem were destined to witness dynastic and social revolutions greater and wider than any which swept over Babylon and Egypt, and to these portents of Christian history the Lord's words may reasonably be referred. On the other hand they do not exclude, perhaps they even suggest, a collapse of the present order of Nature immediately before the *παρουσία* (2 Pet. iii. 12)."

An eminent American philosopher has well said: "Both man and nature are moving along parallel lines on an open curve, the greater part of which is hidden from our vision."[2] Christ alone of earth's

[1] "Commentary," p. 311. [2] Bowne.

religious teachers has given man a glimpse of this great curve. The two systems, nature and spirit, interlock and interact, though the final movement is entirely spiritual. Hence the phrase "coming of the Son of Man" may be interpreted as representing "the kingdom of saints which is to supersede the heathen empires indicated by the Four Beasts in the prophecy of Daniel." The sending forth of the angel reapers may represent and in all probability does represent the vast missionary movement of the Christian Church. But the prophecy contains more than this. It reaches its climax in a personal manifestation of the Son of Man. This is evident from the language used:

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

The last word in philosophy is Personalism. Life has meaning only as it culminates in personality. Fundamental relations exist only between persons. Hence the Gospel of Christ properly ends in the final manifestation of the Supreme Personality. We have an echo of this in the reply of Jesus to the high priest, when asked, "Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus said, "I am: and ye shall

see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mark xiv. 61–62). This saying is not only attested by Matthew but a strong tradition coming through Hegesippus and preserved by Eusebius tells us that shortly before the martyrdom of James, the brother of our Lord, the scribes and Pharisees endeavoured to intimidate him into openly denying Jesus. Whereupon he answered with a loud voice, "Why do ye ask me concerning the Son of Man? He too sits in heaven at the right hand of Almighty Power, and is about to come on the clouds of heaven."

There are scholars who would resolve this prophecy into a triumph of Christianity on the field of history. But we must remember that Jesus was speaking with the shadow of death already upon Him. He, the supreme embodiment of the moral life of the universe, was now the victim of Jewish hate. Yet He realized that from the moment He mounted the cross His triumph would begin. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." His Passion was the path to supreme power. Henceforth He would sit at the right hand of power. The downfall of the Jewish world and the rise of Christianity would be proof of His power. And then His spiritual gaze seems to have flashed across the centuries to the consummation of His Kingdom and He adds, "and coming on the clouds of heaven."

This thought of the final triumph of His Gospel over an evil world seems to have nerved His heart in the hours of awful agony into which His spirit was entering. And this final triumph cannot be dissociated from a manifestation of Himself. In the

hour that He died on the cross the vail of the Temple was rent in twain from top to bottom. This heavy curtain symbolized the screen between the finite and the infinite. By His death Jesus rifted so to speak the close curtain which screens the infinite and since then men have been able to look even though dimly on eternal things and the eternal world. But there must be another rifting so that we shall not merely have glimpses of the eternal order, but shall find ourselves enswathed about by the beauty and order which follows Christ through the dissolving vail, when He shall come in all the glory of the Father to consummate the marriage of the finite and the eternal.

The Answer of Matthew

Renan once declared that the Gospel according to Matthew had exercised the most powerful influence of any book ever written. For ages it was the most highly esteemed of the four Gospels, being the Church's chief reliance in studying the life of Christ. In recent years it has been subjected to searching criticism, both its authorship and accuracy being called in question. But like pure gold it is coming out of the fire brighter for its fiery bath. We have already touched upon its origin in the "Sayings of Jesus" recorded by the disciple Matthew. These "Sayings" were evidently written down quite early. Eusebius tells us that Matthew, who had at first preached to the Hebrews, when he was about to go to other peoples, committed his Gospel to writing in his native tongue, and thus compensated those whom he was obliged to leave for the loss of his personal

teaching. Whether this tradition be true or not, it is admitted by most scholars that Matthew wrote an Aramaic (Hebrew) Gospel, though there is not absolute agreement as to its matter, some contending that it was a mere collection of "Sayings," others approximating it to our present Gospel.

As to the relation between Matthew's Aramaic Gospel and the present Gospel in Greek there has been and is wide divergence. Zahn argues very ably that the present Gospel is a translation into Greek of the Aramaic Matthew. And the weight of tradition seems to incline in this direction. Yet the fact that we find so much of Mark's Gospel *verbatim* in our present Matthew would lead to the supposition that some unknown editor, perhaps Matthew himself, re-edited the "Sayings" and incorporated with it large portions of Mark along with other facts gleaned from oral tradition. One thing is at least sure. We have before us in this Gospel the words of Jesus largely as they were spoken. It is generally agreed among most modern scholars that "in style and feeling Matthew will be something nearer the original."

Since it is admitted by most scholars that in Matthew we are nearer the original, and that it is the most apocalyptic of the Gospels in the sense of fullness, it is difficult to understand the claim of some that in the first Gospel the apocalyptic teaching has undergone an evolution and that the original words of Jesus have become "conformed to the apocalyptic picture which was cherished by the early Church." There is no proof of such an evolution. All that is adduced is an hypothesis from preconceived opinion as to how the Gospels were written. According to

this hypothesis there was early in circulation a document "Q" containing "Sayings" of Jesus mainly ethical but containing also a modicum of apocalyptic sentences such as—"In an hour ye think not the Son of Man cometh," "As it came to pass in the days of Noah, even so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man," and a few others of similar import. The disposition to shave away the apocalyptic teaching as we find it in the Synoptics is due not to any evidence yet presented of an evolution of doctrine among the Apostles but to a conception of Christ and Christianity opposed to an apocalyptic view of life. It is true that the apocalyptic teaching as recorded in Matthew bulks large but it is no larger than would have been expected from a record of "Sayings" penned by an eye-witness and follower, who had witnessed the tragedy of the Cross and the fact of the Resurrection. Naturally his memory would recur to those teachings concerning the "last things" which were spoken shortly before the Passion. Since all the hopes of the future were bound up with the fulfillment of those prophecies we should naturally expect to find them at the very heart of any record of Christ's life and teaching. A religion without an apocalyptic in a world constituted as ours is cannot permanently hold the minds and hearts of men. As there is no evidence of an evolution of the Parousia doctrine in the New Testament, as it lies before us, it is daring and baseless to assume considerable evolution in the short period that elapsed between the death of Christ and the appearance of the first documents of the New Testament in their present form. When some authentic document of that period is dis-

covered it will then be time to consider such theories. The arguments which have been used to bolster up such hypotheses would not gain a hearing in any respectable court of evidence.

On the other hand from a linguistic standpoint there is evidence that Matthew, instead of elaborating "Sayings," regularly and systematically compresses narrative.[1] In all probability some of the "Sayings" of the Master were lost to us not only because of the need of compression by the first writers but also from the inability of the new wine-skins to hold the new wine. Hence it is a truer approach to Christ to attempt to elucidate His teachings that lie before us rather than attempt to pare them down to an ethical Gospel differing only in content of motive and extent of application from other religious systems.

Therefore we turn to Matthew's Gospel with unshaken faith in its credibility as a record of the "Sayings of Jesus." Here we are in all probability near the form of Christ's discourses. We hear the words of Jesus as they fell on the ears of His disciples. We see the truths of the Kingdom as they filtered through their minds. We know at least what conceptions and ideas were created by His teachings. And among all these ideas there is not one more prominent and insistent than that of the Second Coming.

The fact that apocalyptic teaching does not appear in the early chapters of our present Matthew is added proof that it was a part of the original "Sayings." Had the Apostles been constrained to produce an

[1] "Studies in Synoptic Problem," p. 207; "Horæ Synopticæ," pp. 158 ff.

apocalyptic Gospel there would have been psychological indications of it very early in any record of their fashioning. It is not until the tenth chapter that we come across any passage of eschatological significance. When the twelve are sent forth Jesus said, "When they persecute you in this city, flee into the next: For verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come." This has been a difficult passage for commentators, no less than five interpretations having the sanction of able exegetes. "It has been supposed to mean: (1) Till He come and rejoin the Twelve at the end of this journey. (2) Till He make His appearance as the Messiah, distinctly present Himself as such. (3) Till He come spiritually to console and support (John xiv. 23). (4) Till He come to put an end to the Jewish institutions at the destruction of Jerusalem. (5) Till He come to judge the world." The second interpretation has the sanction of Lutteroth and Bruce. The latter says, "No thorough work can be done till the Son of Man be come, *i. e.*, till a universal Gospel for humanity has begun to be preached (Lutteroth). This is a fresh suggestion not to be despised, on so obscure a subject. We are only feeling our way as to the meaning of some of Christ's sayings. Meantime, all that we can be sure of is that Christ points to some event not far off that will put a period to the apostolic mission." It is evident that Christ intended to convey the thought of a definite event that would close their evangelistic mission. What event did close it? Plainly His death and revelation as the Son of Man. Their proclamation of the Kingdom would be closed

by the full revelation of the Son of Man. Jesus selected His words carefully and Matthew seems to have been at pains to record them as they were spoken. In this passage is taught a Coming of the Son of Man, but we must not necessarily confuse it with the final Parousia. We must remember and respect the reserve with which the Master spoke and not read into His words later meanings of the same language. That He did not have in mind the Parousia is evident from the fact that in this charge to the Seventy He speaks of "the day of judgment" as an event lying out in the uncertain future. And near the same date He charged those whom He healed not to make Him known. The reason for this is given in a quotation from Isaiah :

> "Behold, my servant whom I have chosen ;
> My beloved in whom my soul is well pleased :
> I will put my spirit upon him,
> And he shall declare judgment to the Gentiles.
> He shall not strive, nor cry aloud ;
> Neither shall any one hear his voice in the streets.
> A bruised reed shall he not break,
> And smoking flax shall he not quench,
> Till he send forth judgment unto victory.
> And in his name shall the Gentiles hope."

We have here a glimpse of the truth that the full meaning of Christ's mission occasionally flashed on the mind of His disciples. His redemption of the world involved a long period, even the period of the Gentiles. He could afford to use quiet methods, the slow but mighty working of those truths He brought into the world. And yet His followers must be busy as men who at any moment must give an account to

their returning Lord. This combination of truth working like slow leaven in human society and sudden dynamic forces is one of the marvels of the New Testament. It is the only book in the world where these two profound facts of the present world order are sanely and harmoniously interlinked.

In the thirteenth chapter He expounds to His disciples the Parable of the Sower :

"He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man ; and the field is the world ; and the good seed are the sons of the kingdom ; and the tares are the sons of the evil one ; and the enemy that sowed them is the devil : and the harvest is the end of the world ; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire ; so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire : there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Here the vision of His disciples is lifted to the end of the world. A long process of development is implied until the final harvest, when the angel reapers are sent forth. Hence we find that Matthew teaches a double coming—a coming with power into His Kingdom, and a final coming at the end of the world. These two are brought together in the sixteenth chapter :

"If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever would save his life, shall lose it : and whosoever shall lose

his life for my sake shall find it. For what shall a man be profited, if he gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life? For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with the angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds. Verily I say unto you, There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

As we have seen, the phrase "coming in His kingdom" doubtless referred to His death, resurrection, ascension, and energized Church, though some would refer it to the Transfiguration. If, as is probable, Jesus used these words in connection with His statement as to coming in the glory of the Father, He did it not to confuse the two in the minds of His disciples, but to confirm the greater by the less. The fact of His Transfiguration, the fact of His Ascension, would be proof of His final Return.

To those who would bear in mind the whole teaching of Scripture as to the Parousia, the Transfiguration, as recorded in the seventeenth chapter, has its important message. There before the wondering disciples and accompanied by two mighty spirits from the unseen world, Moses and Elijah, His physical form was transfigured until "His face did shine as the sun, and His garments became white as the light." We are not surprised and shocked when we read of such glory passing over the Son of Man. It seems but a natural thing to one so holy and so self-sacrificing as He was. The thought of nineteen centuries has thus transfigured Him. But we must not forget that He "was made in all points like unto His brethren save sin." And we must not forget that in

His consecration prayer, as recorded by John, He prayed that His brethren might be where He is and behold His glory. So they too must be transfigured. And it is a transfiguration in which the whole universe must share. For, if we ponder deeply the conversation that ensued as they came down from the mount, we shall get a glimpse of the Master's mind in reference to the future. He had been for a brief time lifted out of the narrow way of human life into the glorious reaches of infinite existence. Moses and Elijah had talked with Him about His Exodus—His "outgoing" that He should accomplish at Jerusalem. He had a far look across His passing humiliation and awful death into the glory of His final victory.

As they came down from the mount He forbade them to speak of His transfiguration. As they walked along His disciples said: "Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come?" They had just seen Elijah on the mount. He had followed, not preceded Christ. And Jesus answered, "Elijah indeed cometh, and shall restore all things." This seems to have been more a reflection to Himself. The spell of the Transfiguration was still upon Him. He had just conversed with Elijah. He knew what a large place this hero of the Old Covenant filled in the Jewish mind. They were expecting Him to reappear and restore Israel. But the true Restorer and Deliverer "cometh," was already present and working, and would finally "restore all things." Jesus seems to have here a foregleam of His final work in "the restoration of all things." Then speaking more directly to His disciples He said, as if calling Himself back to earth, "but I say unto you, that Elijah is

come already, and they knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever they would." He seems to say: "You need not worry about the scribes. They are looking for Elijah before the Messiah. But Elijah has already come in the person of John the Baptist. They have done unto him whatsoever they would. Even so shall the Son of Man suffer of them." Jesus cherished no illusions as to His fate. "How thoroughly He understood His time, and how free He was from illusions." [1] The carnal Messianic hopes of His race had no place in His thought. Yet He taught an apocalyptic as vast as the universe and as deep as human need.

Even if this interpretation of the above passage be incorrect, the Transfiguration remains a proof of the possibility of and a prophecy of the Parousia. As Chrysostom has said:

> "If we will, we shall also behold Christ, not as they on the mount, but in far greater brightness. For then, to spare his disciples, he discovered only so much of his glory as they were able to bear; hereafter he shall come in the very glory of the Father, not with Moses and Elijah only, but with the infinite host of the angels, not having a cloud over his head, but even heaven itself being folded up so that all men shall see him sitting, and he will make answers to them by himself, 'Come ye blessed of my Father,' 'Depart from me, ye cursed.'"

In the nineteenth chapter of Matthew we find the touching story of the rich young man, who "went away sorrowful; for he was one that had great possessions." Then answered Peter and said, "Lo, we have left all and followed Thee; what shall we

[1] "Ex. Gr. Test.," Vol. I, p. 231.

have?" And Jesus answered, "Verily, I say unto you, that ye who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." This passage alone ought to set at rest the fact of Christ's Second Advent. It teaches plainly that the thought of Christ looked forward to an hour when the whole universe would be renewed. The very word used (palingenesis,—"new-born," "renovated," "becoming-again") proves this. As Bruce has pointed out, this "is a new word in the Gospel vocabulary, and points to the general renewal-regeneration in the end of the days, which occupied a prominent place in Jewish apocalyptic hopes."

It has been suggested that these words were interpolated into the teaching of Jesus, but they bear on their face the stamp of genuineness. They are a transcript from life. To every one who has given up all to follow the Christ there come just such questionings as Peter put to the Master. And to all sincere, self-sacrificing souls there comes the answer which Jesus made to the disciples—the promise of a renovation of all things and a spiritual destiny commensurate with the sacrifice and consecration. It is just what eager hearts who love Him have a right to expect. If the finest souls of the race have laid out their lives to no final purpose then the source and goal of our universe is not an all-wise, all-loving Father, but a Satan who calls men to heights of nobleness and self-surrender only to cast them into the abyss of despair and death.

The Christian doctrine of reward is sometimes criticized as being unworthy of the highest character.

Good deeds ennoble the soul and need no other reward. But this is to fail to understand the nature of the Christian motive. Christians are willing to deny themselves and to surrender their lives to the will and direction of the Author of the universe because they believe Him worthy of it. And there comes a peace after such surrender which the world cannot give. But this peace is partly the result of faith in the goodness and power of God to redeem His universe from sin and death. A Being unable to overcome the chaos of life would not be worthy of homage and self-sacrifice. It is because the soul at its best has a natural appetency for truth and goodness and believes in their final supremacy that it is willing to forego its desire for the finite in order that the infinite may triumph. But the infinite must triumph not only inwardly but outwardly in order to be truly representative of truth and goodness. And this can come only in the regeneration of all things.

In the twentieth chapter is recorded the parable of the wicked husbandmen. While not teaching specifically the doctrine of the Second Coming it throws a strong side-light on the view held by some that the Parousia was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem. After the wicked husbandmen slew the son, the lord of the vineyard comes, destroys them, and lets out the vineyard unto other husbandmen, "who shall render him their fruit in their seasons." As Calderwood points out in his profound interpretation of the "Parables," "The future of the vineyard, beyond this period of tumult and retribution, is brighter and full of promise." It is evident that Christ expected that after the destruction of Jerusalem there would

be a long period of fruitfulness on the part of the Church.

At the close of the twenty-third chapter we have that touching and heart-breaking lament:

> "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that come'th in the name of the Lord."

Christ had just pronounced those awful woes which He knew must come and which every unbiassed student of history knows have come. Yet rent as His heart was by the unutterable anguish of the rejection by His own people of the life which He had brought them He still saw in the far distance the faint gleam of hope which His Second Coming would bring to Israel. Persecuted in every land, seeking vainly for a permanent resting-place in the wide earth, a representative remnant would at last cry, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Here Jesus refers to His Second Coming. The return of large numbers of Jews to Palestine must inevitably result in a revival of Messianic hope. Whatever its present and future form the final movement of Jewish thought must coalesce in the New Testament doctrine of the Consummation of All Things.

The twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters contain the most extended account of the Second Coming to be found in the Gospels. Strenuous efforts have been made by some critics to refer the larger portions

of this discourse to apostolic origin, leaving a few "Sayings" of Jesus admitted to be genuine. The law of resemblance has been invoked to prove that these "Sayings" of Jesus are a mere veneer of the current Jewish expectations, notwithstanding the fact that it has been abundantly demonstrated that the Christian apocalypse possesses a coherent and philosophic unity almost entirely lacking in the eschatology of that day. On the other hand had the teachings of Jesus with reference to the future wholly differed from current expectation then the law of dissimilarity would have been invoked to demonstrate that He was an idle dreamer wholly detached from the deepest religious yearnings of His race and time. How easy it is to frame premises to prove the truth of that which we already believe! How difficult to approach a problem without the prejudice of preconceived opinions! No writer of the Gospels would have dared to insert a systematic statement of Christ's teachings in reference to the "last things" unless such a statement had behind it the authority of the Master. It is admitted by most scholars that if there be a primitive Gospel underlying our present Synoptics that one of its outstanding features would be its eschatological teachings and the expectancy of the return of the Messiah.[1]

It is evident that as the career of Jesus drew to its earthly close the thought of the future would become dominant with Him. It was not merely, as Professor Sanday has so suggestively pointed out, that He turned to the hopes of the Jewish Apocalypses, because "the language of Apocalypse, in one or other

[1] See *Expositor*, June, 1909, "The Date of Q."

of its forms, was almost the only language available." It was not merely "that the Lord felt those latent powers, so steadily restrained and so sparingly used, surging up within Him, gathering all their forces for an outbreak, crowding, as it were, towards the exit and ready to burst out upon the world." [1] He who was now about to take His departure from this world saw beneath some of the current conceptions of His time ideas in which were infoliate fundamental truths as to the world order. He regathered these ideas and shooting them through and through with His own unlimited vision of the movement of history gave us an apocalypse, tinged it is true with Judaism, yet pregnant, as we shall later see, with fundamental conceptions which neither science nor philosophy can ever overthrow. In fact it is to be questioned whether it would have been possible in any other period of human history for a messenger from the Infinite to find ready at hand a vehicle of thought at once picturesque enough to fascinate the common mind and yet at the same time so inclusive of vast world conceptions as to keep the philosopher busy for ages in trying to understand them. We can never fully understand Christ by attempting to approximate His consciousness to ours. Christianity must stand or fall by its power to change human nature and by the truth set forth in its teachings. And these two cannot be permanently divided. A Christianity simmered down to a mere ethical Gospel will sooner or later lose its grip on mankind. It must satisfy the head as well as the heart.

Hence the question as to the genuineness of this

[1] "Christology and Personality," p. 184.

discourse is a most important one. If we cannot find in the Gospels the teaching of Jesus as to the "last things," where shall we look for it? If any one can bring himself to believe that the greatest religious genius of all time, the one who saw the whole field of human life and saw it clearly, would have gone to his death with merely a brief prophecy as to the future of Judaism, he is welcome to such a belief. Such a view involves itself in the hopeless contradiction of admitting that the most potential figure in history, one whose influence to-day is greater than ever, could see so far as the destruction of Jerusalem but not beyond that event! The probability is not that the vision of Jesus was foreshortened but that the prophecies uttered by Him were trimmed as to time, passing through the limited minds of the Apostles. And yet the conscientious effort to record just what the Master said preserves the wider outlook which was in the mind of Christ. This is evident in the discourse as recorded by Matthew and is an evidence of its priority and genuineness. Searching analysis reveals it to be not a Jewish apocalypse tacked on to the teachings of Jesus, but an outline of a mighty prophetic discourse delivered under great emotional stress, and sweeping the whole horizon of human history—Jewish and Gentile—with its final objective in the Second Manifestation of the Son of Man, the logical and necessary dénouement of the moral order of the world.

With these observations we approach the great discourse recorded in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters. In studying this extended discourse it is well to remember that we are in all probability nearer

the actual words of Christ than in Mark or Luke, though the triple tradition is most harmonious and complete. In fact there is no portion of the Gospels better attested than the teachings concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the Coming of the Son of Man. One has but to set the Synoptics side by side to see how deeply and immovably these prophetic utterances are set in the same historic frame. In a true sense they constitute the teaching climax of the Synoptic Gospels:

"And as he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

Could anything be more natural than this? How dogmatic and hypothetical must be that criticism which looks upon this scene as a later creation of the Apostles! Whence then the sublime sanity of Christ's reply?

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man lead you astray. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am the Christ; and shall lead many astray. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places. But all these things are the beginning of travail."

Two conclusions force themselves upon us. One is that the final objective in Christ's thought was not the destruction of Jerusalem but a world-wide program, involving all nations. Secondly that an extended

period of time is necessary for its accomplishment. This is obvious from the warning against supposing the end to be near because of physical and social commotions. This has been a common error in almost every age and has led many pious souls astray. It would seem as if Jesus intended to warn His disciples and followers through all time against such inferences. "For these things must needs come to pass." They are not the end but the beginning of travail, labour-pains in a vast scheme of redemption.

"Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all the nations for my name's sake. And then shall many stumble and shall deliver up one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray. And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold. But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."

We have here the same far look into the future, and we may add, the unique and unparallelled insight into the moral history of the Kingdom. The entrance of Christianity into all lands has been marked, almost without exception, by martyrdom. We find here as elsewhere the doctrine of the certain end:

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

Christ warned His followers against premature alarms. Yet at the same time He predicts the final close of the present order. The expression in Matthew is very strong. "And then shall come the

absolute end (to telos)." Finality marks His teaching. Yet after the prophecy as to the end He turns back to pick up some of the great chords or undertones:

"Therefore when ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that readeth understand), then let them that are in Judea flee unto the mountains: let him that is on the housetop not go down to take out the things that are in his house: and let him that is in the field not return back to take his cloak. But woe unto them that give suck in those days."

The phrase "let him that readeth understand" is here as in Mark in all probability a note of the Evangelist, and is an indication of the early date of the two Gospels. After the profanation and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus there would be no need of such a note. As Bruce has pointed out the tender feeling for those who are with child is another sign mark of genuineness. These cannot flee and the heart of the Master, foreseeing their sorrow and doom, goes out to them in inexpressible grief. Was there ever such a spirit, one who not only wept for the misery of his time but yearned over the suffering of the future!

"And pray ye that your flight be not in winter, neither on a Sabbath; for then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be."

These are strong statements, and yet admitting the tendency of Hebrew prophecy to highly coloured language, it must be confessed that the horrors attending the destruction of Jerusalem are without a par-

allel in human history. Whatever awaits humanity in the future of this we may at least be sure that the healing agencies which Christianity has discovered and the spirit of brotherhood which it has created will be present always to heal and to bless. Even in the worst of wars, at Armageddon itself, the Red Cross will be there! But the passing of the Jewish economy was one of unmitigated cruelty and woe. "Scarcely on another occasion in human history has the spectator the same feeling of irredeemable ruin, of inevitable destruction, as in the case of the fall of Jerusalem in the year 70 A. D."[1]

And yet the ruin of Jerusalem was but the culmination of a long period of turmoil and slaughter. For five years previous the whole land had been drenched with blood, the Jews fighting the Romans, and then divided into fierce bands fighting each other. To cite but a single instance, in the siege of Jotapata, where Josephus commanded the Jews, forty thousand men lost their lives. At Gamala, across the lake from Tarichæa, so severe was the loss to the Romans that Vespasian had to nerve his soldiers to further action, and when at last the city fell nine thousand of its citizens had perished. Yet these were minor preludes of the tragedy enacted in Jerusalem. While the Romans drew near to the doomed city civil war was raging in all its fury. "Three hostile armies were pitted against each other. Eleazar at the head of one party of zealots held the inner court of the temple; John and his band the temple mount, and Simon the city. All that cunning and cruelty could accomplish was perpetually sought

[1] Riggs, "The Roman Period of Jewish History," p. 273.

out and done. Lamentation and death were in every house. While the daily sacrifice was continued—a hollow mockery of service,—the buildings all about the temple were burned, grain supplies, the very life of the city, were destroyed, and a good part of the city itself made desolate. The insane fury of these factions made the terrified and suffering inhabitants actually wish for the coming of the Romans. Nothing could be worse than the useless, hopeless strife, which was, after all, but national suicide." [1]

But these were but the beginnings of terror. After the Romans invested the city five months elapsed before it was conquered—five months, which for bloodshed, cruelty and horror, are without a parallel. It was indeed "the abomination of desolation." After the sword had done its deadly work, fire came to complete "the great tribulation." Though Titus made a desperate effort to save the Temple it too perished in the flames. A few sacred vessels were rescued to grace the triumph of the Conqueror and may still be seen sculptured on the arch of Titus in the Eternal City. Jerusalem, the city of the Great King, over which the Redeemer wept so sadly and so bitterly, was no more. As Josephus says, "There was left nothing to make those who came thither believe that the place had ever been inhabited."

And yet the Jewish woe was not past. Sixty years later when Hadrian determined to build a heathen city on the site of Jerusalem, and a temple of Jupiter on the old temple mount, the Jewish hatred of Rome broke forth again in all its fury. Led by Bar-Cocha, who claimed to be the Messiah, they plunged again

[1] Riggs.

into a war as pitiless in its horrors as those recorded by Josephus. Dio Cassius says, "All Judea was well-nigh a desert. Fifty fortresses and nine hundred and eighty-five villages were destroyed; five hundred and eighty thousand men fell in battle, while the number of those who succumbed to their wounds and to famine can never be reckoned." The Jews were forbidden to set foot in the Holy City, and it was not until the fourth century that a Jew was permitted to enter its precincts, and then only on the 9th of Ab, the day of the destruction of the city—to wail for a short while on the site of the Temple, and to purchase with gold permission from the Roman watch to linger a little longer in the place of mourning.

"And except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

Bruce has a beautiful comment on this passage. The Christians, who have fled away into the mountains, become the preservers of the remnant of Israel. "The preserved are to be preservers. Out of regard to their intercessions away amid the mountains, the days of horror will be shortened. A thought worthy of Jesu."[1]

"Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ, or, Here; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you beforehand. If therefore they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the wilderness;

[1] "Ex. Gr. Test.," Vol. I, p. 293.

go not forth: Behold, he is in the inner chambers; believe it not."

Jesus seems to say to His disciples: "Do not confuse the destruction of Jerusalem with My Second Coming. Do not be alarmed or deceived when it is announced that I am at hand. There will be many false Christs and false prophets before the end of the present economy. Believe them not."

"For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even to the west, so shall be the coming of the Son of Man. Wheresoever the carcase is, there will eagles be gathered together."

Broadus has an admirable note on this passage: "The thought seems to be (Weiss) that the Messiah's coming will be alike visible to all, and so there will be no occasion for some to tell others where He may be seen. . . . When Jerusalem is ready for destruction, the Roman armies will gather and destroy it; when the world lies awaiting the final appearance of Christ to judgment, He will come."[1] We would modify the last statement by saying that when the world is ready for it then Christ will appear to judge it. This is in keeping with the meaning of the old proverb, quoted by Christ, in reference to the eagles and the carcase—"where there are sinners, there judgments from heaven will not be wanting." As sin will reach a culmination, so it will be met by a crisis in judgment—the appearance of the Judge.

When we come to the twenty-sixth verse we reach a statement that has long worried Biblical scholars:

[1] "Commentary," p. 489.

"But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."

The generally accepted interpretation refers this paragraph to the tribulation attending the fall of Jerusalem, and various explanations have been given of the seeming belief of Christ that His Second Coming would follow immediately after that tribulation. Some have been bold enough to affirm that Jesus Himself was mistaken as to the time of His return. Dr. Briggs, with his usual insight, suggests that "immediately" must be taken in a prophetic sense —near to the mind of Christ, "that is, the event was certain, but the time uncertain." But if our exegesis be correct it is unnecessary to resort to this doubtful interpretation. Jesus had been warning His disciples of the danger of confusing the destruction of Jerusalem with His Parousia. He seems to say, "To the spiritually minded who are looking for My return, there will be no uncertainty. It will be like the flashing of lightning across the whole sky. The earth will be involved in a series of prophetic judgments, like eagles gathering about a carcase. There will be a second tribulation like that which accompanied the downfall of Jerusalem. But immediately after the tribulation of those days, *i. e.*, the days preceding My Second Coming, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."

It has been the fashion of late to explain these cosmic disturbances as metaphors for vast social and

religious changes. They are undoubtedly the physical accompaniments of mighty social upheavals, yet the scholarship that would confine these commotions to the social world forgets the place and meaning of the physical universe in the scheme of Redemption. Christ seems to say, in fact He does say, "Not only will earth be vastly disturbed on the eve of My Parousia, but the physical universe will feel its thrill, and tremble in the throes of that transfiguration which must pass over the face of nature. The powers of the heavens shall be shaken." As Briggs so finely says, "These cosmical disturbances belong not only to the theophanies and Christophanies of prophecy, but also to the theophanies and Christophanies of history in both the Old Testament and the New. They represent the response of the creature to the presence of the Creator. They cannot be symbolical in the prophecy without destroying their force in history. These signs are theophanic signs, and they show that a Christophany or Advent of the Messiah is impending."

If the above interpretation be correct then the "immediately" of Matthew is a testimony to the accuracy of that Gospel's record of the "Sayings" of Jesus. The chief business of the publican who followed Christ was to record, rather than to explain, the words of the Master. And it is easy to understand how confusion would arise in the minds of later disciples who were expecting the near Advent of the Redeemer, and were unable to conceive of a long interval between the tribulation of Jerusalem and another tribulation which would usher in the Second Coming of the Lord. So that the very difficulty

which is supposed to lie in Matthew's record disappears, and at the same time corrects the horizon of the other Synoptics.

"And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in clouds with power and great glory."

The last Advent will be so plain and glorious that no one can doubt it. A cloud received Christ from human sight as He ascended from the slope of Olivet. Out from the clouds will He appear again to judge the earth. Clouds hide the sun from our eyes and veil its splendour: through them it bursts and floods all the earth with glory and beauty. So at last the finite vails that hide the infinite shall part and disclose the Perfect Man enthroned and coming to judge and reconstruct.

"And he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Beneath this highly figurative language we catch the gleam of great realities—the noise of dissolving worlds, the movement of those blessed agencies that shall preserve and gather together the souls and bodies of Christ's elect amid the tumult of that great Day. The message of the Gospel is love to the last. Even the dark shadows of earth's final apocalypse are tinged with its rosy light, and amidst the whirlwind and the fire of a dissolving universe Christ still loves and guards His own and gives His angels charge concerning them.

"Now from the fig tree learn her parable: when her branch is now become tender, and putteth forth its leaves,

ye know that the summer is nigh; even so ye also, when ye see these things, know ye that it is nigh, at the doors."

The Revised Version translates "know ye that He is nigh," but the Greek is indeterminate, and St. Luke, who professes to have made a careful inquiry as to what Jesus said and did, reads, "know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh." Yet we must not exclude the idea of personal Presence. Christ thought of Himself as present in every great crisis of His Church, and so He is. But His presence in the Church and to individual souls must be distinguished from His final manifestation in glory. It is evident, when we take all His words into account, that He had in mind two distinct events, the destruction of Jerusalem and His Second Advent. The late Canon Liddon left a splendid comment on this passage:

"He has two future events before him—a nearer and a more distant one—and not merely one event. When he is speaking, each of these events is still in the future, and they are, as St. Chrysostom puts it, like two ranges of distant mountains one behind the other, whose horizon seems to the eye of a distant spectator to form but one single line, and whose real distinctness is apparent only when you approach them, or rather when you have passed the first of the two ranges. 'This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.' This could only refer to the nearer judgment. 'But the Gospel of the kingdom must first be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations,'—this cannot be supposed to be true in its full complement of meaning even yet."

It must be admitted that there are perplexing problems in these Parousia passages. Yet on the other hand were these passages not dominated by the unity

which was in the mind of Christ the confusion would be greater. The disciples with their limited outlook were unable to distinguish between the coming destruction of Jerusalem and the coming of the Son of Man. And we may safely assume that Jesus purposely left some indistinctness of prophetic definition in order to provide for an "accelerated Parousia." The missionary activity of the Church was to largely determine the time of His coming. To have filled in detail the history of the Kingdom would have acted as a pall on the zeal of the disciples. Hence the specific time of the Second Advent is undetermined, though the fact is beyond controversy.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only."

We shall not enter here into the vexed question of Christ's knowledge, but simply reiterate what has already been said, that His human consciousness was not loaded down with any unnecessary details. He knew enough, bore enough, suffered enough, without having His anguished soul harrowed up by the details of the long sad tragedy of human history. It was necessary for Him to know in His incarnate state the height and trend of the great mountain ranges of human life and their moral anatomy, but knowledge of the countless windings of their valleys was not necessary. And we gather from other portions of the New Testament that the Parousia of Christ is in a very true sense a movable date, dependent on the missionary activities of His Church.

"And as were the days of Noah so shall be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of Man."

While Jesus disclaimed knowledge of the exact date the moral conditions of its approach were plain to Him. He thoroughly understood the spiritual philosophy of history. And the picture that He portrayed is one of moral and spiritual decline, a wave of materialism enwrapping the world, which is all unconscious of the nearness of the Advent.

"Then shall two men be in the field; one is taken, and one is left: two women shall be grinding at the mill; one is taken, and one is left."

An apt and forcible illustration to teach the suddenness of His coming and the separation which it will force between those most closely related in life. This passage has been pressed to support the theory of an unseen reign of Christ on earth, but the context forbids such an interpretation.

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what day your Lord cometh. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken through. Therefore be ye also ready for in an hour that ye think not the Son of Man cometh."

Earnest words to be heeded by every Christian. Though the Parousia will lighten the whole world as a flash of lightning, the time preceding the Advent

will be so barren of signs, save to a few rapt spirits, that it will come upon us when we least expect. Hence the importance of being always ready.

"Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath set over his household, to give them their food in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily, I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he hath. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord tarrieth; and shall begin to beat his fellow-servants, and shall eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not and in an hour when he knoweth not, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth."

This last warning seems to have been especially addressed to His disciples and intended for His special ministers in all ages. How awful must be the doom of him who, appointed to feed the sheep and lambs of Christ, takes advantage of his office to oppress and enslave them! On the other hand how blessed shall be that servant whom his lord shall find feeding his flock with the Bread of Life.

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For the foolish, when they took their lamps, took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there is a cry, Behold, the bridegroom! Come ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are going out. But the wise

answered, saying, Peradventure there will not be enough for us and you: go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast: and the door was shut. Afterwards came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

As He had warned the disciples and their successors, so now He uses an exquisite parable to warn the Church and its membership. Note that the same great ideas are pregnant in this passage—the midnight hour when the Bridegroom is least expected, the superficial preparation of the foolish virgins, the Spirit-filled life of the wise, the delayed Parousia, the slumber or lack of watchfulness pervading the entire Church, then the midnight cry, "Behold the Bridegroom! Come ye forth to meet him." An eminent modern philosopher has designated this parable, "Christ's Coming, the Test of Christian Profession." And so it is. There was no outward difference between the virgins until the approach of the Bridegroom. Then while the lamps of the wise leaped into blaze those of the foolish ones flickered out. A spurious preparation will fade away in the presence of the King. The advice of the wise to the foolish has occasioned much speculation, most of it barren, among commentators. But may we not see in this something of the holy wrath that lingered in our Lord's mind as He thought of unfaithful ministers from whom these foolish virgins had purchased oil and the niggard supply which they had advised as ample?

"And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast; and the door was shut. Afterwards came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

Superficial church-membership, a mere desire to be saved, will not avail in that day. The soul must be ready for the Bridegroom with spiritual lamp trimmed and burning bright. The spiritual unpreparedness characteristic of so many so-called Christians will end in eternal night. Not wickedness alone but a foolish neglect of our great and gracious opportunities will seal our doom.

> "No light! so late; and dark and chill the night—
> O let us in that we may find the light.
> 'Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.'"

From the black night and the bitter wailing we turn to the vision of the marriage feast and the joy of the wise virgins. Note with what reserve Christ speaks of His own part in the great drama. Merely a touch to warn and to save. The spirit of the prophet was on the Redeemer and the great strain of the world's goal and the coming Kingdom fell like a stream of inspired music from His lips. The same key-note runs through it all, though He varies it so that in its beautiful but terrible pleadings men may be saved and made ready for His coming.

It is unnecessary to spend much time over the parable of "The Unprofitable Servant," though it is pregnant with meaning. Men shall be condemned not only for lack of spiritual light but for failure to

carry out the trust committed to each soul. Each talent, however small, is a command to service, and capable of infinite multiplication when used aright.

"For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth."

And now having warned His disciples, their successors, His followers of all time, He passes in the parable of the talents to the personal accountability of each man, and this leads naturally and swiftly to the thought of the Last Judgment. Many attempts have been made to dismiss this as an interpolation, but rightly interpreted it is the logical consummation of the great strain of prophetic music to which we have been listening. As Professor Sanday so well says, "the title Messiah included the functions of the Judge—the Judge of all mankind. And we cannot doubt that our Lord thought of Himself as destined to hold this great assize." [1]

"But when the Son of Man shall come in his glory and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in;

[1] "Christology and Personality," p. 175.

naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto even the least ye did it unto me.

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry, and ye did not give me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me. And these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

The strong, yet exquisite ethical teaching of this passage, aside from its logical sequence, stamps it as a genuine saying of Christ. How such a foregleam of final glory must have cheered His heart in the gathering shadows of betrayal, crucifixion and death! It still lingered in His heart when two days later He answered the high priest's question, "I adjure Thee by the living God that Thou tell us whether Thou art the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus said unto him, "Thou hast said. Nevertheless I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." In these modern days there is a tendency

to pare away the authority of Christ until we have left a simple expounder of ultimate goodness. But we face an entirely different Personality in the New Testament. As the shadows of approaching death gathered about Him the deeps of Infinite Life within Him rose to the surface of consciousness and asserted an absolute authority, which can be explained either as an obsession or as resting on fact. He who will take the trouble, blessed trouble, to read all the words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew will see in the last recorded saying the logical crown of His teaching:

"All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the consummation of the age."

The Answer of Luke

It may be regarded as settled that the author of the Third Gospel and of the Book of Acts was Luke the Physician. Harnack says, "The evidence is of overwhelming force; so that it seems to me that no doubt can exist that the Third Gospel and the Acts were composed by a physician."[1] This could have been no other than Luke, since the early tradition is complete and unvarying. "It is manifest that in all parts of the Christian world the Third Gospel had been recognized as authoritative before the middle of the second century, and that it was universally be-

[1] "Luke the Physician," p. 198.

lieved to be the work of St. Luke. No one speaks doubtfully on this point." [1]

The establishing of the Lukan authorship is of great importance, for it establishes also in large measure the genuineness of the other Synoptic Gospels. Luke's Gospel while proceeding on independent lines is manifestly dependent on both Matthew and Mark. "Luke's acquaintance with and use of the apostolic source of the First Gospel is just as certain as his want of acquaintance with the Gospel itself." [2] He was familiar with the "Sayings" or Logia compiled by Matthew, but probably never saw Matthew's Gospel in its final form. He also closely follows Mark in the narrative portion of that Gospel. He had access to other sources—oral tradition and written accounts to which he refers in the opening of his Gospel.

His evident aim was to furnish a Greek friend, Theophilus, with an accurate account of the life of Jesus Christ. "There can be no doubt that St. Luke, all through the Gospel, has in mind the points on which a Gentile reader would want further information or would feel greater or less interest, or would be more or less impressed, and so we meet with explanations, we find teaching of special Jewish interest ignored or curtailed, and methods of argument such as appeal to the Old Testament dropped." [3] This fact gives the Third Gospel special value in dealing with the Parousia passages. If the apocalyptic discourses in the "Sayings of Jesus" had been of Jewish

[1] Plummer, "Comm.," p. xvi.
[2] Weiss, "Intro. to N. T.," Vol. II, p. 294.
[3] D. B., Vol. III, p. 170.

manufacture then in all probability the keen scalpel of this Gentile physician would have dissected it and have given us the substance of Christ's teachings. The dialectic native to the Greek mind would have rejoiced in such Socratic restoration. But we find him reproducing the same apocalyptic as Matthew and Mark though there is evident a deeper grasp on its historic aspects. The note of time is not insistent. The conception of the future of the Kingdom on earth is larger and wider. Nor is there any decided attempt to place the "Sayings" of Jesus in chronological order. His purpose was to give his friend Theophilus a true portrait of Jesus by welding together teachings of similar import, even though they had been spoken widely apart. The first direct statement of the Second Coming is to be found in the ninth chapter :

"If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it ; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man profiteth, if he gain the whole world, and lose or forfeit his own self? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in his own glory, and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels."

Here is announced a final definite coming attended by the glorious inhabitants of the spiritual world. "The glory of the royal advent of Jesus will be, first, that of His own personal appearing ; next, the glory of God ; lastly, the glory of the angels,—all these several glories will be mingled together in the incom-

parable splendour of that great day."[1] After announcing His final appearing He says with marked emphasis, "There are some of you that stand here, who shall in no wise taste death, till they see the kingdom of God." If we can dismiss from our minds any preconceptions as to the meaning of these words and think of how Jesus had taken a far look to the final consummation with its rewards and punishments, and now turns back to emphasize the spiritual character of His gospel, its unseen nature, its visibility to spiritual eyes, we can then begin to understand how at this stage of His teaching the predominant goal would not be His Second Coming in glory but His coming into His Kingdom! While the physical universe must reach its consummation and flower into the spiritual the important thing is the Kingdom of heaven within the soul. This is evident from the missionary charge to the seventy disciples, as recorded in the tenth chapter:

"And into whatsoever city ye shall enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: and heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

That the spiritual character of His Kingdom is still uppermost in His mind is seen in the words with which He addresses the seventy on their return:

"Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I say unto you, that many prophets and kings desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not."

[1] Godet, "Comm. Luke," Vol. II, p. 420.

The twelfth chapter is a mosaic of "Sayings" probably spoken on different occasions and brought together by Luke so that his Greek friend would see more clearly and completely that Jesus was the Son of God. It has been suggested that the teaching of Christ as preserved for us by Luke refers peculiarly to the use and abuse of riches. This is clearly emphasized in this twelfth chapter, where the danger of covetousness is strongly portrayed, where God's care for His children is beautifully set forth, and where the certain coming of the Son of Man is proclaimed:

"Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning; and be ye yourselves like unto men looking for their lord, when he shall return from the marriage feast; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may straightway open unto him. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself and make them sit down to meat, and shall come and serve them."

It is sometimes asserted that the Second Coming, as portrayed in the Gospels, is too spectacular. We shall return to this objection later, but we would call attention to the fact that in this passage His love for His followers and their future joy are the dominant notes. The figure of the lord girding himself to serve his servants is one peculiarly appropriate to Christ. What a joy it will give Him to gird Himself with omnipotence for the purpose of giving joy to the children of time!

"And if he shall come in the second watch, and if in the third, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief was coming he would have watched, and not have left his house to be broken through. Be ye also ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of Man cometh."

Here again Luke emphasizes the uncertainty of the time of Christ's coming while he emphasizes the certain fact. He also calls attention to the impossibility of knowing the hour of that visitation. We know so little of God's vast plans that it is unwise and foolish to dogmatize as to the time of them. And this very uncertainty ought to make us doubly watchful, lest that hour overtake us as a thief in the night.

"And Peter said, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even unto all? And the Lord said, Who then is the faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall set over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you that he will set him over all that he hath. But if that servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the unfaithful. And that servant who knew his lord's will and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with *many* stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with *few* stripes."

Godet, who, for spiritual insight, has been unsurpassed among modern commentators, has some pregnant thoughts on this whole discourse:

"The Parousia is a sweet and glorious event to the servants of Jesus (verses 35–38). But at the same time it is solemn and awful: for He who returns is not only a well-loved Master, who comes to requite everything which has been given for Him; He is also a thief who takes away everything which should not have been kept. . . . Of all the sayings of Jesus, there is not one whose influence has made itself more felt in the writings of the New Testament than this (1 Thess. v. 1, 2; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. iii. 3, xvi. 15); it had awakened a deep echo in the heart of the disciples. It indicates the real meaning of waiting for the second advent of Christ. The Church has not the task of fixing beforehand that unknown and unknowable time; she has nothing else to do, in virtue of her very ignorance, from which she ought not to wish to escape, than to remain invariably on the watch. This attitude is her security, her life, the principle of her virgin purity. This duty of watching evidently embraces both the disengagement and the attachment which are commanded in this discourse. . . . Verses 45, 46 represent an apostle or unfaithful minister under the image of an unprincipled steward. The condition of fidelity being the constant watching for the master's return, this servant, to set himself more at ease in his unfaithfulness, puts the thought of that moment far off. So the minister of Jesus, who, in place of watching for the Parousia, substitutes the idea of indefinite progress."

The thirteenth chapter of Luke, one of the most exquisite mosaics in the entire New Testament, sets forth clearly the time element in the growth of the Kingdom. The unpromising fig-tree, spared for another year in hope of fruitage, the mustard tree, and the leaven plainly teach us that Jesus had no false hopes as to the near realization of His Kingdom. And yet the closing paragraph, perhaps the saddest wail that ever rang out from His heart, ends in the prophecy and promise of His second coming:

"O Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto thee! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you *desolate:* and I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Some have thought that here Jesus referred to Palm Sunday, but such an interpretation is inconsistent with the ideas then surging in the mind of Christ. "How poor and insignificant would this meaning be, after the previous sayings! What bearing on the salvation of Israel had this separation of a few weeks? Besides it was not to Galileans that Jesus was speaking; it was to the representatives of the Pharisaic party (verses 31–34). The words which Jesus here puts into the mouth of converted Israel in the end of the days are taken from Psalm cxviii. 26. This cry of penitent Israel will bring the Messiah down again, as the sigh of Israel, humbled and waiting for consolation, has led Him to appear for the first time (Isa. lxiv. 1). The announcement of the future return of Jesus, brought about by the faith of the people in His Messiahship, thus forms the counterpart to that of His near departure, caused by the national unbelief." [1]

One of the ablest and most spiritual of living Hebrew Christians has recently said:

"At the rising of the Sun of Righteousness all clouds and darkness must vanish. All the evils which have befallen Israel during their night of weeping have been consequent on the hiding of God's face from them.

[1] Godet.

"Oh, yes, to behold that countenance, once marred for us more than that of any man, to walk in its light, to gaze upon it until we are transformed into the same image—that is full and perfect salvation. It is our blessed privilege now to gaze upon it by faith: 'Whom having seen not we love; on whom though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving (already by anticipation) the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls' (1 Pet. i. 8, 9). But this period of invisibility and silence will not last forever. The day of unveiling and of manifestation is drawing nigh, when His 'blessed feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east'; when Israel shall behold Him with their eyes, and pointing to Him, as it were, with their hands, shall say:

"'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is our Jehovah; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation' (Isa. xxv. 9)." [1]

Herein the faith of the Hebrew Christian would seem to outrun that of the Gentile. Is it a prophecy of the morning? But we pass on to the seventeenth chapter:

"And being asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God cometh, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you."

The Pharisees were expecting a visible, earthly, political kingdom. They needed to be taught the spiritual nature of God's Kingdom and that whatever its outward form or physical accompaniments it was

[1] Baron, "The Shepherd of Israel."

in essence spiritual. Hence He drove home the truth which they most needed. But a little later, in talking with His disciples He reverts to the objectivity of the Kingdom as visible in the Person of the Son of Man. "It is only to those who possess something of His spiritual life that He can speak profitably of His future return."[1] Alas, how true still!

"There will come days, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it. And they shall say to you, Lo, there! Lo, here! go not away, nor follow after them: for as the lightning, when it lighteneth out of the one part under the heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall the Son of Man be in his day."

Bruce has a fine comment: "Tribulation will make them long for the advent, which will put an end to their sorrows. 'Ye shall not see,' not necessarily an absolute statement, but meaning: the vision will be deferred till your heart gets sick; so laying you open to temptation through false readers of the times encouraging delusive hopes. Do not follow, give no heed to them." There will be no uncertainty about the Son of Man in His coming. It will be a flash of lightning, lighting up the whole heavens, physical and spiritual. "Men do not run here or there to see a flash of lightning: it shines simultaneously on all points of the horizon." The scope of His coming will be in keeping with the dignity of His Person. But in order that His followers may not be found sleeping Jesus draws a graphic picture of the spiritual condition of mankind just preceding the Advent.

[1] Godet.

"And as it came to pass in the days of Noah, even so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise even as it came to pass in the days of Lot; they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but in the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all: after the same manner shall it be in the day that the Son of Man is revealed."

"While believers sigh with growing ardour for the return of their Lord, carnal security more or less complete takes possession of the race. It is an epoch like those which have preceded all the great catastrophes of history. The business of earthly life is carried through regularly; but religious feeling gradually disappears from the heart of men who have become secularized." Such a condition is not inconsistent with large and powerful ecclesiasticisms, rather one of their accompaniments. In the time in which Jesus was speaking the Jewish race was held in the grip of a mighty religious establishment. Its ideal was earthly power and glory, not unlike some of the ideals which have dominated and still dominate in some of the Churches which bear the name of Christ! And in all the Churches of Christendom to-day perhaps a majority of the followers of Jesus have their gaze focused on things earthly. How few are waiting and watching for the Lord from heaven?

"In that day, he that shall be on the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him not go down to take them away: and let him that is in the field likewise not return

back. Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall seek to gain his life shall lose it: but whosoever shall lose his life shall save it alive. I say unto you, In that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left."

It is difficult to resist the thought that in this paragraph we have another mosaic of St. Luke. The two pictures drawn are entirely different. In the one men are bidden to flee, in the other they are rapt away by the power of God. Hence it is probable that Luke inserted here a prophecy which properly belongs to that portion of the discourse dealing with the destruction of Jerusalem. In the confusion of thought as to Christ's return it was exceedingly difficult for him to disentangle "the Sayings," and place them in proper order. But if we treat the first two sentences as a dislocation the connection is clear. "In that night" is the moral night before the Advent. The manifestation of the Son of Man is so sudden that it instantly divides humanity into two parts—the saved and the unsaved. "The beings who shall have been most closely connected here below shall, in the twinkling of an eye, be parted forever." Solemn and awful words! How needful, if they be true, that we ourselves be ready and persuade those nearest and dearest to us to be also ready.

The parable of the Importunate Widow, which follows, was spoken to encourage the Church, widowed by her Lord's absence, to persevere in prayer, assured that her long waiting would, when her faith became insistent, be rewarded by the return of her Bridegroom and the discomfiture of all her enemies. One of the foremost of living Biblical

scholars has well said, "The faith of the Church of the day is defective in its lack of apprehension of the reigning Christ and in its neglect of the Second Advent of our Lord. . . . The faith of the Apostolic Church was fixed upon the Messiah enthroned at the right hand of God, ruling over the Church, and soon to come in visible presence to reward the faithful and to condemn and punish the unfaithful and the wicked. This is the normal Christian attitude at all times, looking upward to the enthroned Christ and forward to His Parousia." [1]

In the nineteenth chapter we have a precious and powerful parable, which was spoken to disabuse the minds of His disciples of the belief that the Kingdom was to appear immediately:

"A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and *to return*. And he called ten servants of his, and gave them ten pounds, and said unto them, Trade ye herewith till I *come*. But his citizens hated him, and sent an ambassage after him saying, We will not have this man reign over us. And it came to pass, when he was come back again, having received the kingdom, that he commanded these servants, unto whom he had given the money, to be called to him that he might know what they had gained by trading. And the first man came before him, saying, Lord, thy pound hath made ten pounds more. And he said unto him, Well done, thou good servant: because thou wast found faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Thy pound, Lord, hath made five pounds. And he said unto him also, Be thou also over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: for I feared thee, because thou art an austere

[1] Briggs, "Messiah of the Gospels," p. ix.

man: thou takest up that which thou layedst not down, and reapest that which thou didst not sow. He saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I am an austere man, taking up that which I laid not down, and reaping that which I did not sow; then wherefore gavest thou not my money into the bank, and I at my *coming* should have required it with interest. And he said unto them that stood by, Take away from him the pound, and give unto him that hath ten pounds. And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds. I say unto you, that unto every one that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him. But these mine enemies, that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me."

Plummer's note on this parable is excellent: "To the disciples of all classes it teaches the necessity of patiently waiting and actively working for Christ until He comes again. To the Jews it gives a solemn warning, respecting the deadly opposition which they are now exhibiting, and which will be continued even after His departure. There will be heavy retribution for those who persistently reject their lawfully appointed King. The nobleman, who goes on a long journey and returns a king, is Christ. . . . The main lesson of the parable is the long period of Christ's absence, during which there will be abundant time for both service and rebellion. There is not to be, as the disciples fancied, *immediate* triumph and joy for *all;* but first a long period of probation, and then triumph and joy for those only who have earned them, and in exact proportion to their merits." [1]

[1] "Commentary," *in loco.*

This parable shows not only that in the mind of Jesus the time element in the development of His Kingdom was strong, but that as His earthly ministry drew to a close the thought of His final return was equally clear and strong. When we turn to the twenty-first chapter with its sublime discourses we find that He draws a very clear distinction between the time of Jerusalem's visitation and that of the Second Advent.

"And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and offerings, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in which there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And they asked him, saying, Teacher, when therefore shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass? And he said, Take heed that ye be not led astray: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am he; and, The time is at hand: go ye not after them. And when ye shall hear of wars and tumults, be not terrified: for these things must needs come to pass first; but the end is not immediately."

Godet translates the last clause, "but the end cometh not so speedily." A long period of trial and persecution before the destruction even of Jerusalem.

"Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be great earthquakes, and in divers places famines and pestilences; and there shall be terrors and great signs from heaven."

Strauss in his "Leben Jesus" says: "The Annals of Tacitus and the Antiquities of Josephus prove famines, earthquakes, etc., in the times of Claudius and of Nero and of the Jewish war."

"But before all these things they shall lay hands on you and shall persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake."

The life of St. Paul, both as persecutor and as persecuted, is an illuminating commentary on this prophecy.

"It shall turn out unto you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate beforehand how to answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay. But ye shall be delivered up even by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my sake. And not a hair of your head shall perish. In your patience ye shall win your souls."

On its face there is a contradiction in this paragraph. In the sixteenth verse the death of some is prophesied, but in the eighteenth it is said, "not a hair of your head shall perish." Plummer thinks that "this proverbial expression of great security must here be understood spiritually." So also Bruce. But Godet says: "There shall, indeed, be some individuals who shall perish in the persecution, but the Christian community as a whole shall escape the termination which will overtake the Jewish people."

"But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand. Then let them that are in Judæa flee unto the mountains; and let them that are in the midst of her depart out; and let not them that are in the country enter therein."

It is an historic fact that the Christians, remembering this warning, fled to Pella beyond Jordan, and

thus escaped the terrible catastrophe.[1] How thoughtfully Jesus provided for His infant Church! So also for it in every age, if it has but the listening ear to hear His voice.

"For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress upon the land, and wrath unto this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all the nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

This passage alone ought to silence the error which has reappeared in modern times that the destruction of Jerusalem was the Second Coming of Christ. Jesus here teaches plainly that after the doom of that city a period will intervene to be known as the "times of the Gentiles." Instead of interpreting this time as one of Gentile rulership, as many commentators have done, both Bruce and Godet suggest that it is the time of "Gentile grace." "The Jews had had their day of grace, and the Gentiles were to have their turn. Such an idea would be congenial to Luke, the Pauline evangelist, and in sympathy with Paul's own thought in Romans xi. 25." It is in the midst of this time that we are now living. But according to the teachings of Jesus this time also must close.

"And there shall be signs in the sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity, the roaring of the sea and the billows; men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."

[1] Eusebius, "Hist. Eccl.," Vol. III, p. 5.

The record of Luke here marks an advance on the thought of Matthew and Mark. While the physical universe shall be disturbed the thought which seems uppermost in his mind is the distress of men and nations. He seems to have caught a deeper glimpse of the apocalyptic teaching of Christ. What a picture of the last days—the earth convulsed by earthquakes, the sea disturbed and rolling in on the palpitating land, men's hearts failing them in fear! Or as Godet puts it: "Like a ship creaking in every timber at the moment of going to pieces, the globe which we inhabit, and our whole solar system, shall undergo unusual commotion."

"And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

Like a diaphanous cloud, charged with lightning, the unseen world shall break in on the finite order, and in the midst of it the Son of Man with all the glory of His Father and all the Holy Angels.

"The glorious sight will gladden
Each waiting watchful eye,
For the crowning day is coming,
'Tis coming by and by."

"But when these things begin to come to pass, look and lift up your heads, because your redemption draweth nigh."

According to Luke's account of Jesus' teaching the time of the Second Advent is not to be looked upon by faithful Christians as a Dies Iræ, a day of wrath and terror, but as a happy time, for the redemption

of all things is at hand. Whatever it may mean and whatever it may bring to the faithless and sinful, to the wise virgins it is the coming of the Bridegroom to the marriage of heaven and earth, the ending of the long night of human suffering and the dawn of a cloudless and perfect eternal morning.

"And he spake to them a parable: Behold the fig tree, and all the trees: when they now shoot forth, ye see it and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh. Even so ye also, when ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh."

Luke gives this parable in almost the same language as Matthew and Mark. When considered in the setting given it in the three Synoptics, it seems clearly to refer not to the final Advent but to the destruction of Jerusalem. The latter was a definite event so near to the mind of the Master that He was enabled to fix its details and warn His disciples accordingly. Its terrible sufferings and bloodshed were to be advent angels of His coming Kingdom.

"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all things be accomplished."

Matthew and Mark have "till all these things be accomplished." Hence it is most likely that in delivering this parable Jesus was pointing towards Jerusalem and referring to its destruction. The lesson that He desired to teach was that the generation then living would see the extinction of the Jewish economy and the beginnings of the Kingdom of Christ. But the passing of Judaism was also a prophecy of the final passing of the present world order. So that

His consciousness leaped the intervening ages, and feeling within Him the surge of eternal truth, He exclaims:

"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away."

But with that solicitude and tenderness which ever marked Him His thought turns back to His disciples under the limitations of time and the shadows of the darkening future, and He says,

"But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare: for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of the earth."

If we compare the parallel passages in Matthew and Mark we find that Jesus is here speaking of *that day* of whose exact time no one knoweth, not even the Son, but the Father. Unlike the destruction of Jerusalem it will involve the whole earth. Being a movable date but few comprehensible signs will presage its approach, and those of such a stupendous character as to escape rather than enlighten the finite mind of man. Hence the only wise attitude for every Christian is one of constant watching.

"But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Godet says, "The image is that of a net which all at once encloses a covey of birds peacefully settled in a field. *To watch* (verse 36) is the emblem of

constant expectation. With expectation, prayer is naturally conjoined under the influence of that grave feeling which is produced by the imminence of the expected advent. The word *σταθῆναι*, *to stand upright*, indicates the solemnity of the advent. A divine power will be needed, if we are not to sink before the Son of Man in His glory, and be forced to exclaim: 'Mountains, fall on us.'"

At the close of the twenty-second chapter, in answer to the question, "If thou art the Christ, tell us," Jesus says, "If I tell you, ye will not believe: and if I ask you, ye will not answer. But from henceforth shall the Son of Man be seated at the right hand of the power of God." Luke does not add, as does Matthew and Mark, "and coming on the clouds of heaven." And it is significant that while Luke's Gospel teaches the fact and reality of the Second Advent as fully as the other Synoptics, yet the dominant note of both his Gospel and the Book of Acts is the fact and power of the Risen Lord. The Second Advent is but the logical consequence of His Presence and Power at the right hand of God. In that touching account which Luke gives of the walk of two disciples to Emmaus the impression is one of overwhelming tenderness and power as the risen Christ quietly talks with the heart-broken and wondering men and says, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into His glory!"

No one could company with Paul for long and not be impressed by the reality and power of the Risen Christ. Just as no one can associate to-day with a

genuine spirit-filled Christian and not be impressed by the reality and power of the ever-living Lord. And after all the sure proof of the Second Advent is the manifestation of that spiritual life which has its rise and power in eternity and must be gloriously manifested when the temporal fades and passes away.

The Synoptic Agreement

Our examination of Mark, Matthew and Luke is conclusive evidence that while on this earth Jesus clearly and fully predicted His Second Coming to this world. The teaching lies inextricably embedded in the tradition that lies at the heart of the Synoptics. All attempts to remove it are doomed to failure. All such efforts are on a par with a proposal to cut out a man's heart and expect him to live.

One singular fact in the Synoptic record deserves attention. The accounts of Jesus after His resurrection have little or nothing to say about His final return. His mind seemed burdened with it before His death, yet after His triumph over the grave He has but little to say concerning it. Had the Gospels been manufactured by men there would not have been this gap. The post-resurrection discourses would have been filled with predictions of that early return for which His disciples were looking. In this we have another proof of the authenticity and genuineness of the record. The disciples, as best they could, reported what the Lord had said, not what they thought He ought to have said. This post-resurrection silence of the Synoptics as to the Parousia is significant. It teaches us that Jesus had passed from the valley of self-emptying and humilia-

tion into the fullness of the life of the Son of God. The future of world history had become, in a sense that we cannot grasp, a *now* to Him. In His enlarged and glorified spiritual powers He can be present with His disciples "all the days."

And yet, as we shall more fully see, the doctrine of His final return was not lost sight of. As endued with "all power" He sends them forth on their world-wide mission there necessarily comes to His thought and heart the goal of that mission, the redemption of mankind, and the changing of the natural order to meet that redemption. And so He adds, "all the days even unto the consummation of the age."

The Answer of Acts

The references to Christ's Second Coming in the Book of Acts are few, but these are of much importance. In the first chapter we read,

> "And when he said these things, as they were looking up, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they were looking steadfastly into heaven, as he went, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven."

Those who are unsympathetic towards the appearance of the supernatural would treat this passage as an interpolation or gloss. But such a view of the universe is exceedingly superficial. If the world is the product of a Being, who feels kindly towards His creation, then we must find its ultimate meaning and

expression along the lines of a Father's love. Two of the foremost of living biologists have recently declared that the world order can be interpreted only in terms of love.[1] Then the laws which govern the manifestation of forces must be subservient to love. And the occasional manifestation of the supernatural is just what we ought to expect in such a world, since love must at times necessarily outrun law. A father, whose love does not occasionally rise above the customary laws of his household, is not entitled to the name.

And as Jesus in His Ascension passed from the temporal into the eternal order, so there can be no barrier to prevent His return, especially in the great consummation when the physical order shall be undergoing transformation. His return to receive the fruitage and witness the transfiguration of the world, which He has redeemed by His blood, would have been a logical corollary even if the heavenly witnesses had not appeared to attest it. And if Christ be, as not a few eminent scientists have proclaimed, "the crown of the cosmic process," then His manifestation in that hour, when the physical universe is reaching its glorious goal, will be natural, fitting and necessary as the Head and Source of Life's final Apocalypse.

This truth is implicit in the speech of Peter recorded in the third chapter:

"Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that he may send the Christ, who hath been appointed for you, even

[1] Thomson and Geddes, "Evolution."

Jesus: whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restoration of all things."

To an intelligent Jew these words of Peter would convey a distinct and profound meaning. As the heavens had received Christ, then "no earthly kingdom, no temporal sovereignty, such as the Jews expected, was to be looked for." The word translated "restoration" (ἀπο-κατά-στασις) had been used by Josephus to designate the return of the Jews from captivity, and also by Philo for the restoration of inheritance at the Jubilee. Thayer, in his Lexicon, defines the word as used with "all things" (τῶν πάντων); "the restoration not only of the true theocracy but also of that more perfect state of things (even physical) which existed before the fall."

Jacobson has a fine comment on this passage: "St. Peter embraced the whole period between the Ascension and the Second Advent, when the regeneration (Matt. xix. 28) will take full effect, when the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. viii. 19–21) by the bringing back, in the new heavens and new earth (2 Pet. iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1–5) of all things out of the confusion caused by sin, into the harmony of creation before the fall."[1]

There are no direct references to the Parousia after Peter's speech until the seventeenth chapter, though the entire history is pervaded by the presence of the Risen Christ. We see the ascended Christ manifesting Himself by performing those ministrations which He had promised His disciples when He bade them good-

[1] "Speakers' Commentary."

bye, the sending forth of the Holy Spirit, the appearances to Stephen and to Paul, the providential care which He exercised over His disciples. No careful reader of Acts can escape the conclusion that these men were dominated and satisfied by the sense of His presence in the spiritual world. And in all probability, nay, we say, in all certainty, a portion of the apostolic preaching must have concerned itself with "the restoration of all things" and the return of the Son of Man in glory to judge the world. "The prophesied coming of the Messiah is not fulfilled in the earthly life of Jesus; He has yet to come. Jesus was indeed declared the Messiah by the Resurrection, but even this had not made Him the actual Messiah for this lower world (though He rules in and from heaven). Only by a new second appearance in glory upon earth will Jesus become the actual (glorified) Messiah for His people." [1]

And we are not surprised to find such a Christology the theme and climax of Paul's famous speech in Athens, as recorded in the seventeenth chapter:

> "Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art, or by device of man. The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth man that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he raised him from the dead."

The appointed day is "the day of Christ." Paul appeals to the moral sense of his hearers and points

[1] Harnack, "Date of the Acts and Synoptic Gospels," p. 107.

to the Last Judgment, when the man on whom God has set His seal by raising him from the dead will as the representative of God and man judge all men. There is a tendency just now to tone down the claims of Christ as the supreme and final Judge. Most recent treatises on Biblical theology are weak at this point. Yet there are indications of a turn of the tide. In a recent profound study of the Person of Christ, Professor Mackintosh says, "His claim to be Judge in the great future has occasionally been denied, but in one who knew Himself to be the inaugurator of the perfect Messianic age it is a fact neither novel nor incredible. One who remits sins on earth in the consciousness that God's holy love is present in His person, may well discharge that solemn function at the End. Bossuet has argued that the steps are even yet discernible by which the later Church mounted to this ascription of Judgeship ; but it may be pointed out that even in the most primitive form of the tradition—'Whosoever confesseth Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father who is in heaven' (Mark x. 32)—Jesus definitely takes a place as Intercessor or Advocate in the heavenly world which is certainly not less superhuman in significance than the claim to be final Judge of men. The uniqueness of Jesus for His own consciousness could not be more startlingly demonstrated than by this fact, that He who forbade His followers to judge each other should have foretold that He Himself will judge the world."[1]

We have now examined in detail those documents which enshrine the primitive Christian tradition.

[1] "The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ," p. 33.

Nowhere do we find the least want of agreement or harmony concerning the Parousia. Some doubt as to the time shadowed the minds of some of the writers but this is all. The great truth as to the Return of Jesus as Judge and King stands entire and unbroken at the very heart of this tradition. It cannot be dislodged. If our examination of the documents which have come down to us under the name of John should disclose the same truth, then the chain of Scripture evidence will be complete. To those sublime and wonderful writings we now turn.

III

THE ANSWER OF JOHN

IN modern days speculation has been busy with the writings ascribed to the Apostle John. It has been asserted by many scholars that the author of the Apocalypse could not have written the Gospel, and not a few have said that it was impossible for this disciple to have written the Fourth Gospel. Some, following Eusebius, have been at great pains to discover another John, John the Elder, on whom to fasten the authorship of the most remarkable biographical sketch the world has known. Others hold the real author to be unknown.

But such critical solutions involve more difficulty than the traditional view. It is true that Eusebius interprets Papias as speaking of two Johns, but Irenæus, who knew Papias personally, and was himself a disciple of Polycarp, who claimed to be a spiritual son of the Apostle John, nowhere speaks of any John save the Apostle. Eminent scholars, including Harnack, have attempted to break the force of this testimony, but as has been pointed out by Reynolds, they greatly underestimate the fullness of this testimony.[1] A recent writer, who has collated all the passages in Irenæus bearing on this question, says, "This cumulation of evidence places Irenæus's opinion beyond doubt. The author

[1] D. B., Vol. II, p. 682.

of the Fourth Gospel was as certainly an apostle for him as though he had taken a page to state, argue and prove the point. He would have been astonished if he could have known that any reader would ever think otherwise. One can hardly believe that those who have been in doubt about the matter have read Irenæus."[1]

And more recently still Dom Chapman, in his scholarly little volume "John the Presbyter and the Fourth Gospel," has shown that the title "Presbyter" was a most fitting one for the aged Apostle. The idea that an unknown author should have produced this most wonderful of all human compositions and have left scarcely a name in the early Christian record is unthinkable. As Professor Sanday has pointed out, "Imagine this solid mass suddenly thrust into the course of events, as Schmiedel would say, somewhat about the year 140, between Basilides and Valentinus and their disciples, as it were under the very eyes of Polycarp and Anicetus and Justin and Tatian, without making so much as a ripple on the surface."

Every attack on the authenticity of the Gospel has been successfully met.[2] The natural and logical solution is much easier than any critical hypothesis. We have seen how Matthew's dictate of the "Sayings of Jesus" would be the first necessary documents. Then would follow Mark's brief vivid biographical sketch. This would cause a reëditing of Matthew with biographical details. Later would

[1] Lewis, "The Irenæus Testimony to the Fourth Gospel," p. 19.

[2] See Peabody, Abbot, Drummond, Salmon, Sanday.

come Luke's carefully compiled and verified history. After the destruction of Jerusalem and towards the close of his long meditative life would be written John's spiritual interpretation of the earthly life of Jesus. This would have been the natural, the logical, the necessary, and may we not say, the providential development of the fourfold record.

So that we can turn without fear to the Gospel itself. And here the first question which faces us is, how far the portrait of Christ presented in this Gospel is true to life? Some have contended that the author superimposed on the historical Jesus a philosophical robe of Jewish and Greek material. If so, the keenest philosophical minds have been unable to trace the seams. Such a theory would make the author of the Fourth Gospel not only the first of literary artists but a metaphysical genius beside whom the masterpieces of Plato become feeble and dim. The sanest solution of the whole problem is that this fisherman of Galilee, whom Jesus loved, lived to a great age, and pondered long and prayerfully the words and acts of which he had been a hearer and an eye-witness. He followed the Aristotelian method of analytic insight. "This method consists in concentration of the mind upon the subject in hand, marshalling together all the facts and opinions attainable upon it, and dwelling on these and scrutinizing and comparing them till a light flashes on the whole subject."[1] Out of this long mental and spiritual distillation there came the precious fragrance of Eternal Love which the Fourth Gospel casts on the air of this harsh world. This Gospel is the

[1] Sir Alexander Grant, "Aristotle."

alabaster box, which John's love fashioned, and which in his old age he gave as a priceless legacy to the struggling and persecuted Church. How its heavenly perfume fills the Church of the twentieth century with longings towards that deeper unity which is the very breath of the Christ of the Fourth Gospel!

An eminent English scholar has said, "To no age since his own has St. John had more to say than to ours; the opening of the twentieth century is, in some ways, wonderfully near to the close of the first."[1] This is due in part to the fact that it "speaks with timeless voice to the permanent needs of men" and in part to the fact that the twentieth century is witnessing more of the workings of that principle and spirit of unity which seems to lie at the very heart of the universe and of which Jesus Christ is not only the supreme expression but its mightiest dynamic.

In order to portray Jesus as the incarnation of this principle John was compelled to "view all things *sub specia æternitas*, and this gives the air of half-reality to his descriptions of local and temporal events. It is not only his Christ who is not of this world. The believer also is not of this world, is not judged, doth not sin, is passed from death unto life." The Synoptic Gospels portray the earthly life of Jesus, and when they have followed Him through His death and resurrection into the eternal order then they suddenly close their record. The Book of Acts carries the sense of the Risen Presence further on yet it grows less prominent as the Kingdom

[1] Findlay, "Fellowship in the Life Eternal," Introduction.

develops among men. But John, carrying out a movement of mind and heart already manifest in the Pauline Epistles, projects the conception of Christ into the depths of eternity, and by a portrayal of His innermost spirit while on earth anchors Him forever in the Heart and Mind of the Godhead. Hence all criticism of the Fourth Gospel is wasted unless the very core of the Gospel—its doctrine of the Person of Christ—be successfully assailed. And such an attack must forever be impossible because if, as is admitted by both philosophy and science, the soul of the feeblest man possesses an unknown and irreducible quantum, by what process can we successfully dissect the one supreme soul who has appeared among men? "The Fourth Gospel is then fundamentally the work of an apostle, who, in the evening of life, and as a protest against the idealizing tendency which sought to turn Christianity into a group of abstract conceptions, made known to the Church the intuition he had gained of the eternal value of the historic Lord —His unique relation to God as uncreated Son, His relation to men as essential life and truth." [1]

The above statement as to the spirit and purpose of John's Gospel explains to some extent why the teaching as to the Second Advent is not so prominent as in the other Gospels. The view-point is not so much one of time and temporary manifestation as it is one of ultimate reality. It is the last word of the Cosmos, Love. And yet none the less the fact of the Second Coming is distinctly taught. In the fifth chapter Jesus says:

[1] Mackintosh. "The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ," p. 98.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself: and he gave him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

"Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment."

In this passage we have the movement of spiritual and physical dynamics held in their proper order. "The present manifestation of Christ's vivifying power in the spiritual resurrection (*is coming and now is*) is stated in contrast with the future manifestation in the general resurrection (*is coming, verse 28*)."[1] Note the emphasis laid on both resurrections. "The partial spiritual quickening and judgment is consummate in a universal quickening and judgment."[2] Efforts have been made to break the force of these statements by claiming "that the early Apocalyptic ideas were changed, in the Fourth Gospel, into their spiritual equivalents."[3] That John did emphasize the spiritual character of the Parousia is admitted, but it cannot be successfully maintained that in his Gospel the old apocalyptic hopes were dissolved and the judgment became not a definite event but as something present and always in process.[4] Those who face all the facts are forced to admit that the Fourth Gospel teaches a specific manifestation at the end of the present world order. Professor Von Dobschutz,

[1] Westcott.
[2] *Idem.*
[3] Scott, "The Fourth Gospel."
[4] *Idem.*

who has seen this quite clearly, admits that such is the teaching of John, but thinks that Jesus must have been mistaken as to His final manifestation in glory, since that event has not yet come to pass! And yet at the close of his scholarly volume he is forced to admit "that we have to expect and pray for a state of things in which God's dominion will be fully established, and all obstacles, all evil energies finally destroyed." [1]

If there could be doubt as to Christ's meaning, as recorded by John, it is dispelled by the language used in the sixth chapter:

> "All that which the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, that of all that which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. . . . He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day."

Here we meet with the same conception of "the last day" which we found in the Epistles and the Synoptic Gospels, but with a deeper spiritual insight. The outward manifestations of the Parousia arise from a spiritual dynamic. "The possession of eternal life is followed by the crowning action of the Son: *and I*—I the Incarnate Son—*will raise him up.* Eternal life is consummated in the restoration of the believer to a transfigured manhood. So far from the

[1] "The Eschatology of the Gospels."

doctrine of the Resurrection being, as has been asserted, inconsistent with St. John's teaching on the present reality of eternal life, it would be rather true to say that this doctrine makes the necessity of the Resurrection obvious. He who feels that life *is* now, must feel that after death all that belongs to the essence of its present perfection must be restored, however much ennobled under new conditions of manifestation."[1]

In the forty-fourth verse of this chapter Jesus says, "No man can come to Me, except the Father that sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." And again in the fifty-fourth verse, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Five times in the same discourse Jesus reiterated the fact of "the last day" and the consequent resurrection. It seems to have rested heavily yet gloriously on His mind. It was the complement of the spiritual life He was then introducing and imparting to the race. It was the "one far-off divine event," when the whole man should be transfigured and glorified in the consummation of all things.

The next four chapters contain no reference to the Parousia. In the eleventh Martha says to Jesus, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died. And even now I know that whatsoever Thou shalt ask of God He will give Thee." Jesus said unto her, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha answered, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus replied, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on Me,

[1] Westcott.

though he die, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die." These words have been quoted by some to prove that there is no physical resurrection at "the last day," but a spiritual resurrection at the death of every believer. But it is evident that no such idea was in the mind of the Master. A study of His words as recorded in the previous chapters reveals a growing sense of the eternal life that was rising like a spring-tide in His soul. In the face of this fullness of life within, physical death, terrible as it was, seemed an impertinence. The grave, cold and cruel as it is, could not cheat the love of Christ. Those who die physically still live spiritually, if they cling unto Him. And in a profound sense those who live in Christ can never die. His sphere of power is one of life and those who abide in that spiritual sphere are beyond the reach of death, though the outward man may decay and perish.

And yet, while voicing such great and blessed truths, Jesus recognized the horror and bitterness of physical death. It caused Him to groan in spirit with "indignant emotion." With eternal life at flood-tide within His soul the black shadow of death mirrored itself on His spirit and He shrank from it, even as He recoiled from it in the Garden. He wept! Then with a prayer to His Father He girded His spirit and sent His voice into the sphere of death.

"And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound with a napkin."

In the raising of Lazarus we see a symbol and a prophecy of "the last day" of which He had been

but recently speaking. Man is not merely soul and spirit, but body, soul, and spirit. The resurrection of Lazarus and the resurrection of Jesus are divine pledges of the glorious reunion of the integral elements of man's nature, even after physical death has done its worst. In the beginning of creation spirit somehow adumbrated itself into matter. In the resurrection matter in some way will reëstablish a perfect correspondence with spirit.

In the twelfth chapter there is a clear and strong reiteration of the fact of the Last Judgment:

> "And Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that beholdeth me beholdeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me may not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my sayings, and keep them not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day."

The emphasis which we find laid on "the last day" in the Gospel of John proves beyond the shadow of a reasonable doubt that the goal of history in this Gospel is the same as in the Synoptics—the final Judgment and the Advent of Christ. But one may ask, Why did not John give more prominence to the prophecies of the Parousia? There are two answers. He knew that they were fully given in the other Gospels, and hence it was unnecessary to repeat them. Secondly, John had already in all probability penned the Apocalypse in which he portrays the Parousia on the widest possible canvas.

And yet in the very nature of things the Parousia cannot be excluded from his portrait of Christ. In that wonderful fourteenth chapter, where Jesus is trying to comfort His sorrowing disciples, it flashes out in exquisite beauty:

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, trust me also. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, ye may be also."

It has been claimed that these words refer only to a spiritual coming, or a coming at the death of the believer. But such exegesis does violence to sound canons of interpretation. B. Weiss would hold these words as applying to the "second coming alone," but Westcott has more correctly observed, "though the words refer to the last 'coming' of Christ, the promise must not be limited to that one 'coming' which is the consummation of all 'comings.' Nor again must it be confined to the 'coming' to the Church on the day of Pentecost, or to the 'coming' to the individual either at conversion or at death, though these 'comings' are included in the thought. Christ is in fact from the moment of His resurrection ever coming to the world and to the Church and to men as the Risen Lord. The thought is expressed by the use of the present *I come* as distinguished from the future *I will come*, as of one isolated act."

To John the one important fact was the continuous Parousia of Christ to the soul of the believer. The final appearance in glory must not be allowed to over-

shadow this. Yet the constant spiritual presence of Jesus but intensifies the longing to see Him face to face. As after His resurrection He was occasionally visible to His disciples, comforting them and establishing their faith, so one day, that last great day, He will become permanently visible to redeemed and glorified men.

In the twenty-first chapter, which seems to be an appendix added by the author, we have an account of an appearance of Jesus to His disciples by the Lake of Galilee.[1] After strongly, yet gently, testing the love of the Apostle Peter, He predicted Peter's death, which caused him to look at John and say, "Lord, and what shall this man do?" Jesus answered, "If I will that he tarry until I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me." Here the Risen Christ distinctly foretells His Second Coming and places it beyond the death of Peter. Hence the impression went abroad that John would not die, but live until the Parousia. But John corrects this impression by adding these words, "Yet Jesus said not unto him, that he should not die; but, if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

Thus in the Fourth Gospel we have the "second coming" in its proper setting, disentangled from the destruction of Jerusalem, and wholly indeterminate as to time, yet a certain definite event of the future—the Day of Resurrection, the Day of Judgment, the Day of Christ's Coming. Those, who have attempted to establish a marked difference between the escha-

[1] It is possible that John added this appendix to call attention by a lesson from one of the appearances of the Risen Lord to the solemn truth of the final Parousia.

tology of the Synoptics and that of the Fourth Gospel, have failed. The view-point is somewhat different but the goal is the same.

The Apocalypse

When we turn to this marvellous book we face a troubled sea of criticism. In the past it has suffered much from saints without scholarship and from scholars with no pretense of sainthood. But of late years it has received attention from men who united wide learning with deep piety. Yet it is to be doubted whether we are yet in a proper position to understand its sublime and terrifying visions. The late Dr. Amory Bradford defined prophecy "as the art of reading history forward." But the prophet, alas, alone possesses the art. The ordinary man must wait until history sets the seal of fact on prophecy. Hence in a prophecy like the Apocalypse, in which Heaven, Earth and Hell are the stage, and God, Man, Christ and Antichrist play the title-rôles, the mind is bewildered and overwhelmed with the vastness of the conceptions. Its very vastness, its gigantic symbolism makes for unreality.

And yet one of the significant things of our age is the fact that this long sealed book is beginning to yield up its glorious treasure. In a recent address Sir William Ramsay said, "We have neglected the Apocalypse too long." It is evident that light is beginning to break from it. Swete's recent commentary is a monument of patient, scholarly, reverent, illuminating exposition. It is the first-fruits of the golden harvest yet to be reaped from this wonderful Book.

To the present writer Swete's argument for the unity of the Book seems conclusive. The Apocalypse falls naturally into three parts: the messages of the Risen Christ, the Drama of Redemption as it was manifested "within the vail," and the clash of spiritual forces on the field of human history. But these divisions must not be pressed too far on account of the connecting interludes. The canvas is a gigantic one and the mighty material is handled with consummate skill and exquisite beauty of expression. Tennyson, the most perfect artist among modern poets, was often entranced by the imagery of the Apocalypse.

Speculation has been rife as to the authorship. For a long time the wide discrepancy between its style and that of the Fourth Gospel was cited against the tradition of a common authorship. But of late marked points of resemblance have been noted.[1] If we accept the old tradition that the Gospel was written late in life and penned by an amanuensis these differences in style may be accounted for. "It is, however, to be remembered that the eccentricities of language in the Apocalypse consist much oftener in disregard of the laws of Greek idiom than either in blank ignorance of those laws; and that sometimes at least, when the laws of language are broken, it is because either the Greek language, or all human speech, is unaccustomed to express what the Seer has to express." [2]

Those familiar with the great masters of literature and their differences in style at different periods of

[1] Swete, "Comm.," pp. cxxvii–cxxix.

[2] Simcox, "The Writers of the New Testament," p. 81.

life will not regard seriously the objection of divergences of style. But it has been urged that the author of the Apocalypse paints an entirely different portrait of Christ from that presented in the Gospel. "The Christ of the Apocalypse is infinitely majestic and august, but His predominant characteristic is unbounded power, showing itself in a just severity. As a Shepherd, He rules with a rod of iron ; as the Lamb, He is terrible in His anger ; as the King, He treads the wine-press of the wrath of God. Only once or twice does the tenderness of our Lord's companionship, or the intimacy of His fellowship with men make itself felt in this book. There are few echoes in the Apocalypse of the intense sympathy for the suffering and for sinners which the Gospels associate with the human life of our Lord. The Ascension and Exaltation account for the power and glory with which He is invested by the Apocalyptist, but they do not wholly explain the changed point of view ; we feel that the *Revelation of Jesus Christ* has passed through a mind which has coloured it with its own severity, and the colouring is not unlike that which John of the Synoptic Gospels might have been expected to impart. This fact, though far from being decisive, may well lead us to hesitate before we reject the attribution of the Apocalypse to the Apostle John." [1]

But this view needs to be supplemented by the fact that the portrait of the Risen Lord is as tender as could be expected under the conditions of Love Enthroned and a Hostile World. When His glory overcomes the Seer He touches him with His right

[1] Swete.

hand and says, "Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades." The glory of the Risen Christ is now that which John tells us He prayed for in His last night on earth. And the messages to the Seven Churches, while severe in dealing with their shortcomings, are also tender and close with glorious promises to all who repent. In the fifth chapter, where the strong angel calls for "one worthy to open the book, and loose the seals thereof," the Seer weeps much because no one was found worthy to open the book, or to look thereon. And one of the elders said unto him, "Weep not; behold, the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath overcome to open the book and the seals thereof." And lo, when he looks, instead of a mighty lion he beholds a Lamb, standing as though it had been slain! The glory and power of the Lamb are due to the fact that He had purchased His right to reign by shedding His blood and establishing His Kingdom among men. This is evident from the new song, "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory and blessing."

It is a curious literary criticism which would deny to the author of the Fourth Gospel more than one style or form of expression, especially when in the one book he is dealing with eternal ideas under the form of time, and in the other dealing with manifestations in time as remanifested in eternity. No literary genius ever attempted such a stupendous task. Dante and Milton attempted but one phase:

St. John essayed both. A scholar of profound insight has recently written: "Under the placid surface of St. John's nature there lay a slumbering passion, a brooding ambition, that blazed up on occasion with startling vehemence. Now it is the John Boanerges who reappears in the Apocalypse—strong in contempt and hate no less than love, whose soul resounded through its whole compass to the 'indignation of the wrath' of Almighty God, that thunders against the haters of His Christ and the murderers of His people. Nor in Gospels and Epistles is this Divine anger—love counterpart in a world of sin—very far to seek. The chapter which tells 'how God so loved the world,' ends with the fearful words concerning the disobeyer of the Son, 'The wrath of God abideth on him' (John iii. 36). The holy wrath of the Apostle flashes out against immoral pretenders to high Christian knowledge, when he exclaims in the First Epistle, 'If we say that we have fellowship with God and walk in darkness, we lie': 'If a man say, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar' (1 John i. 6, ii. 22, iv. 20). When he likes, the gentle John can be the most peremptory and dogmatic of teachers: 'He that knoweth God,' he asserts, 'heareth us; he who is not of God, heareth us not. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error' (iv. 6)." [1]

To enter fully into the teachings of the Apocalypse as to the final Advent would be to understand and unseal all the visions of this Book. Such a task, even if it were possible, would exceed the limits of our inquiry. But it must be said that the key-note

[1] Findlay, "Fellowship in the Life Eternal," p. 51.

of the Book, its great undertone, is the Parousia of Christ. The opening of the seals are mighty events which must take place ere the last seal is broken and the Son of God is manifested in glory and victory. Zahn, in his monumental Introduction, gives a good outline of the visions which must occur as the first six seals are opened: (1) the word of God must take its victorious way through the world (vi. 2; cf. Matt. xxiv. 14); (2) bloody wars must come (verse 3f.; cf. Matt. xxiv. 6; Mark xiii. 7); (3) times of scarcity (verse 5f.); (4) plagues destroying part of the people (verse 7f.; cf. Matt. xxiv. 7; Luke xxi. 2); then (5) bloody persecutions of the Church, the punishment for which is delayed (verses 9–11; cf. Matt. xxiv. 9; Mark xiii. 2–13); but at last (6) events in nature which are to convulse the world and fill earthly despots with terrible anticipations of the wrath of God and of the Lamb which is about to be poured out upon them (verses 12–17; cf. Matt. xxiv. 29f.; Luke xxi. 25, xxiii. 30). After the events which prepare the way for the end have thus led up almost to the day of the parousia, the opening of the seventh seal can bring only the parousia itself."[1]

It is singular, as has been pointed out by Zahn and others, that the opening of the seventh seal does not bring immediately the promised Parousia. There is a significant silence in heaven, a Sabbath rest on earth, typifying the unlimited progress of the Kingdom, freedom from persecution, vast missionary activity. "The opening of the seventh seal is followed after a brief pause by a vision of trumpet-bearing angels, which works out in detail the revelations

[1] "Introduction N. T.," Vol. III, p. 395–396.

of the fifth and sixth seals, and brings us again to the end, now seen in the light of the final triumph for the Kingdom of God. The second action of the book begins, like the first, with contemporary history (cc. xii., xiii.). The Church is seen struggling with Satan and his agents, the world-power and its spiritual ally, afterwards described as the False Prophet. Another large episode follows (c. xiv.), consisting of a series of secondary visions, the purpose of which is to exhibit the safety and purity of the ideal Church, the judgments impending over her persecutors, and the impending end of all things—a set-off against the apparent triumph of evil, and a preparation for the great vision which is to follow. Then come the seven Last Plagues, a series corresponding in this half of the book with the seven Seals and seven Trumpets in the first half. But the end is not yet; the world has its counter manifestation to make, and the magnificence of its great city is described, though only to enhance the terror of its downfall. The fall of the existing world-power does not, however, exhaust the resources of the Enemy; long after it the prophet foresees a recrudescence of evil, and a final conflict between Christ and the forces of Satan, which ends in the annihilation of Satan's power. So the last obstacle to the mystic marriage of the Lamb is removed, and with the glories of His Bride, seen in the light of the consummation, the Apocalypse ends."[1]

It will thus be seen that the Apocalypse is divided into two great series of visions—the one dealing with the work of the Ascended Christ, and the other with

[1] Swete, "Comm.," pp. xlii–xliii.

the destinies of His Church. As Professor Swete has so ably pointed out, "the two actions, from the nature of the case, are more or less synchronous, both belonging to the interval between the writer's own time and the end; but, while covering the same ground, they approach it from different points of view. With each of the actions there is orderly movement but this again is not tied to chronological succession; it is the movement of great spiritual forces rather than of historical persons and events. . . . Each part of the Book fulfills its own purpose, and is complete within its own sphere; taken together, the two parts present a revelation of the whole ordering from the Ascension to the Return."

The Apocalypse might be truly called the Gospel of the Parousia, for the Second Advent is the secret of its unfolding and the goal of its movement. Some of its visions are not yet understood, and in the nature of prophecy they cannot be now. But the great movement of the Book is plain. Its great undertone is the Second Coming of Christ. We hear it breaking through every now and then as in the sixteenth chapter when the hosts of earth are gathering to the battle of Ar-Magedon:

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

There are a few passages about which there has been much contention, especially one in the twentieth chapter, which is as follows:

"And I saw thrones, and they that sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of

them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

This is the passage upon which premillenarianism bases its theory of a bodily reign of Christ among His saints for a period of a thousand years. Such a view is so opposed to the whole trend of New Testament teaching that it has had little acceptance in modern times, though a few able and devout men do still advocate it. Professor Swete well says: "St. John does not commit himself to a reign upon earth. . . . The symbolism of the Book is opposed to a literal understanding of the Thousand Years, and of the resurrection and reign of the saints with Christ. It is 'the souls' of the martyrs that St. John sees alive; the resurrection is clearly spiritual and not corporeal. . . . The Seer of the Apocalypse does not anticipate history; he is content to emphasize and express in apocalyptic language the principles which guide the Divine government of the world. That the age of the Martyrs, however long it might last, would be followed by a far longer period of Christian supremacy during which the faith for which the martyrs died would live and reign, is the essential teaching of the present vision." [1]

The binding and loosing of Satan are dependent upon the manifestation of the martyr spirit. When that ceases to manifest itself generally through the Church then Satan is loosed out of his prison. His loosing has nothing arbitrary about it; it follows the

[1] "Comm.," pp. 265, 266.

law of cause and effect. Yet in our interpretation we must not lose sight of the fact that there are intimations in the New Testament of a "first resurrection" for some choice spirits. Dante describes some great souls among the saints longing for their bodily restoration. Yet while the basis of such a hope is found in the New Testament it is not strong enough to build any dogmas thereon, and as far as this present world is concerned there is no intimation that Christ will appear to reign before the consummation of all things. The whole issue was ably stated by Bishop Waldegrave, the Bampton lecturer for 1866: "It is quite possible, nay rather I will say probable, that the Gospel may yet achieve far greater victories both among Jews and Gentiles, than it hath yet won. But there is in my judgment nothing in the books of the prophets to encourage us to expect, on the one hand, a state of unmingled happiness, and on the other hand, a personal presence of Christ upon earth, an universal conversion of mankind to God, or a visible manifestation of the Church's glory. There is, in short, nothing to prove that the dispensation of grace shall ever become, before the end of all things, a dispensation of sight."

The Apocalypse in line with the other books of the New Testament teaches that the Parousia of Christ will be accompanied by or preceded by the dissolution of the present physical order:

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heavens had fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and small, standing before the throne; and the books were opened: and another book

was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and be their God: and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more; the first things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."

The Apocalypse supplies that further and more complete teaching in reference to the Parousia which is lacking in the Epistles and the Gospels. These latter stop with the Ascension. And this is one of the proofs of the credibility of the New Testament. Had it been of human composition alone the departure of Christ would have been a signal for the most extravagant predictions concerning His return. Instead there is almost complete silence on this subject save to reiterate His teachings until the appearance of the Apocalypse. The New Testament is everywhere subordinated to the spirit of Jesus. Only when the Risen Lord deigns to reveal His truth does any accredited apostle dare to speak.

The Apocalypse completes the teaching of Christ. The psychological problem underlying the imagery of the Book has never been seriously investigated. Such an investigation would involve an inquiry into the relations between the finite and eternal world orders, and the expression of these relations in symbols. So far no one has approached the Seer of Patmos in either tenderness, beauty or sublimity of expression. Nowhere is the most refined spiritual sense offended:

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of the Lord did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it. And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by day (for there shall be no night there); and they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it: and there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Even though he was a lonely exile on a storm-beaten isle, something of the peace of the New Jerusalem seems to have passed over and entered the soul of the Seer of Patmos as he penned the last chapter:

"And he shewed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve

him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall be no night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light and they shall reign forever and ever."

Professor Swete, to whom we have been so heavily indebted in tracking the thought of the Apocalypse, has an illuminating note on this passage. After discussing the question whether this vision is to be interpreted of the heavenly Jerusalem or of the future glory of the Church in this world, he says, "The Holy City which passes before the mind of St. John is the Ideal Church as conceived in the purpose of God and to be realized in time. So far as this conception is purely spiritual, the powers by which it can be converted into actuality have been in possession of the Church from the first, and the results are manifest in the moral triumphs of Christianity. Already the many colours of the New Jerusalem and the flashes of its crystal luminary may be seen by those whose eyes are not closed against the heavenly vision; men slake their thirst in the River, and nations find healing in the Tree. But as a whole the ideal is still far above us, nor will it be reached until a new age has been inaugurated by the Lord's Return."

With the vision of the New Jerusalem the Apocalypse properly closes. The addenda, beginning at verse six, is in the nature of a postscript to confirm and to warn:

"And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which

must shortly come to pass. And behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book."

And again in the twelfth verse the same word of warning and exhortation :

"Behold, I come quickly ; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according to his work."

Up to the sixteenth verse the angel had been speaking and revealing in the name of Christ. Now Jesus Christ, Himself, speaks and seals the testimony of the angel :

"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star."

"He is the Root and Offshoot, the Beginning and the End of the whole economy associated with the Davidic family. In the Messiah, the latest Scion of the House of David, its earliest ideals and hopes are realized." Even from His Throne He has a thought and a message for the Jewish race through which He passed. He is also "the Star of Dawn, whose coming precedes the sunrise of the Day of God."

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth let him say, Come."

The Spirit and the bride represent the Spirit of Prophecy as manifest in the Church. "The Christian Prophets inspired by the Spirit of Jesus, and

the whole Church—the Churches considered as ideal unity—respond as with one voice to the Lord's great announcement. It rouses in all Christians the desire, never long dormant, for His Return. The call is to be taken up and repeated by every hearer of this Book; not only the Church in her ideal unity, but each individual member of every Christian congregation where the Book shall be read is invited to demand the fulfillment of the Lord's promise, *ἰδοὺ ἔρχομαι ταχύ*." [1] Alas, how feebly this great cry rises and echoes on the lips of the Church and its members at this hour! And in the next line we have the reason:

"And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely."

Only those who drink deeply of His Divine Life long for His Return. That Life makes them yearn for a fuller manifestation of that Larger Life of which they have the "earnest" in their own spirits. The Risen Saviour still calls men to come to Him and drink of the water of Life Eternal. They will then long for the fullest manifestation of Him, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

"I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book."

[1] Swete, "Comm.," p. 310.

It is Jesus who is still speaking. The value of this Revelation is so great and precious that awful woe must come unto any man who would pluck away any part of its truth. "Consciously to rob this book of any part of its essential teaching is to rob oneself of the bliss which it promises; to add to its teaching is to incur the visitation which it threatens. For either act, if deliberate, proclaims a will which is out of harmony with the Will of God and with His ordering of the world; and the rebellious will, while it continues such, cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God here and hereafter. The warning is addressed to Christians who by their attitude towards this Book show themselves to be unworthy of their inheritance." [1]

"He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly."

The last word of the Apocalypse is the answer of the Risen Lord to the cry of the Church. "Yea, I am coming and coming quickly." As we look back across the eighteen centuries that have intervened since these words were spoken it seems a long time. And it has been long as men count time. But from the standpoint of the Eternal world it has been scarcely a watch in the night.

"Yea, I am coming and coming quickly." The better rendering of the present tense suggests the thought that the Risen Christ is not passively waiting the hour for His reappearance, but that He is striving mightily from His Throne to bring that day to its birth. He is hastening through the Church the

[1] Swete, "Comm.," p. 312.

movement of the vast spiritual and social forces whose convergence on the field of human history will herald His approach.

"Amen, so be it: come, Lord Jesus."

The Church trusting her Risen and Reigning Lord rests her faith on that word. Working, praying, toiling, fighting her way across the centuries, surrounded by foes, stabbed time and again, betrayed by professed followers, she possesses her spirit in the peace of the blessed Promise of her Heavenly Bridegroom. And thus the wonderful vision of the Seer of Patmos closes with the Prophecy and Promise of Christ's Return.

The Letters of John

The structural affinity linking the Second and Third Epistle with the First vindicates their common authorship. And the author of these Letters was unquestionably the author of the Fourth Gospel. "The writing is so closely connected with the Fourth Gospel in vocabulary, style, thought, scope, that these two books cannot but be regarded as works of the same author. The arguments which have been alleged to support the opinion that the books were by different authors, do not seem to me to need serious consideration. They could not be urged if the books were not detached from life and criticized without regard to their main characteristics."[1]

The first Epistle, which alone mentions the Parousia, has a significant message for our age. For, as

[1] Westcott, "Epistles of John," p. xxx.

Findlay has pointed out, "to no age since his own has St. John more to say than to ours; the opening of the twentieth century is, in some ways, wonderfully near to the close of the first." Our time like that of St. John is one of great mental and spiritual unrest. Many of the old foundations seem to be breaking up. Most conclusions in the mental and spiritual worlds are halting and hesitating save for the prevalent heresies which periods of unrest necessarily produce. In such hours the unorientated thinker comes forward with his solipsistic explanation of life. The Gnosticism of the first century is parallelled by the so-called "Mental science" and kindred errors of the twentieth century.

Over against Docetism, which taught that the body of Jesus was not real but simply a manifestation, and Gnosticism, with its theory of a Demiurge, St. John placed his testimony as to the reality of Christ's body:

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life."

After setting forth the reality of Christ's appearance and the meaning of that appearance, he passes, in the second chapter, to warn his hearers:

"My little ones, a last hour it is. And as you know that antichrist cometh, even now many antichrists have arisen. Whence we perceive that it is a last hour."

St. John does not say that "the last hour" has come. The article is absent in the original. He had

been too well disciplined by long waiting to dogmatize as to the times and the seasons which God had reserved to His own knowledge. But he was seer enough to read the characteristics of his own age. He saw in the passing of the old order to which he had been accustomed, in the rise of powerful systems of error, in the troubled world about him—he saw the signs of a last hour. And one of the characteristic signs of this "last hour" was the appearance of many Antichrists. He here calls attention to the doctrine so marked in the early Pauline Epistles—the coming of the Antichrist. He accepts this doctrine and points out the fact that many have already made their appearance. Wide-spread error and departure from "the faith once delivered to the saints" is a marked feature of "last hours." As Findlay says, "The Antichrists of St. John's last hour, the opponents most to be dreaded by the Church, were teachers of false doctrine. They 'deny that Jesus is the Christ' (verse 22). This denial is other than that which the same words had denoted fifty years before. It is not the denial of Jewish unbelief, a refusal to accept Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah; it is the denial of Gnostic error, the refusal to admit the Divine Sonship of Jesus and the revelation of the Godhead in manhood through His person. Such a refusal makes the knowledge of both impossible; neither is God understood as Father, nor Jesus Christ as Son." [1]

The last half of the nineteenth century was busy with speculations concerning the person of Christ. Even now there are many who call themselves Chris-

[1] "Fellowship in the Life Eternal," p. 218.

tians who deny to Jesus Christ the prerogatives and worship which St. John demands for Him. Judged by the last document of the New Testament all such have the spirit of Antichrist:

"This is the antichrist—he who denieth the Father and the Son. Every one who denieth the Son, hath not the Father either: He that confesseth the Son, hath the Father also. As for you, let that which you heard from the beginning abide in you; if that abide in you which you heard from the beginning, you too in the Son, and in the Father shall abide; and this is the promise which he himself made unto us—the eternal life."

Would that the Church of the twentieth century were possessed by the same unruffled faith that marked the Christians at the beginning of the first century! Amidst the unrest, the alarms, the persecutions, the heresies of that time, how simple and serene their faith! Such belief was due to the anointing which they had received from the Risen Christ.

"These things have I written to you about them that mislead you. And as for you, the anointing you received from him abideth in you, and you have no need that any one be teaching you. But as his anointing teacheth you concerning all things, and is true and is no lie—even as it taught you—abide in him."

The unction from the Holy One assured their hearts in that "last hour." And in the crisis of faith which marks the opening of the twentieth century His Power still seals and confirms His faithful ones. Even those, who know not this anointing, must con-

fess that in a time when the citadel of Christianity is being assailed from without and from within, never has the power of Christ in civilization been more regnant. While His intrenched camp—the Church and its wall of Revealed Truth, is being shelled by unhallowed criticism and the prophets of social unrest, He is capturing the ends of the earth and placing His crest upon all the giant forces of civilization.

"And now, little children, abide in him, so that if he should be manifested, we may have confidence, and not shrink with shame from him in his coming."

Here St. John reiterates the same doctrine of Christ's return found in the earliest documents of the New Testament. He uses the technical word (ta parousia) "the presence." And it is this conception which must dominate our thought of Christ's Second Coming. The disciples were so impressed with the stupendous fact of the first Advent that it was difficult for them to conceive of Christ's final manifestation in any other wise than a return to this earth. But we find in the words of Christ, the Pauline Epistles, and the teachings of John the deeper and truer teaching of a "manifestation." According to the inner doctrine of the New Testament Christ will not come to set foot again on this earth in its present, "frail," finite condition, but the veil between the finite and the infinite will be rifted or withdrawn or consumed, and the glorious consummation, towards which all creation has been groaning, will be seen with the Personal Presence of Christ as its source, goal, centre and life. And all those who have truly believed in Him, the living and the dead, shall be

transfigured into that eternal life, of which He is the incarnation and the crown. "He shall head up all things in Christ."

"Beloved, we are now children of God;
And it hath not yet been manifested what we shall be!
We know that if He should be manifested, we shall be like Him;
Because we shall see Him as He is.
And every one who hath this hope set upon Him,
Purifieth himself, according as He is pure."

Summary of the Scripture Answer

We have seen that a belief in such a manifestation of the world's Redeemer runs like a golden thread throughout the entire New Testament. That such an idea could have been interpolated into the teachings of Jesus is negatived by three facts. In the first place the tradition, as reported to us, bears the historical incongruities which would naturally arise in the minds of Christ's followers, who were unable to grasp at the time such a vast world program. And it may well be questioned whether we to-day, with our limited knowledge of nature and life and our over-specialization, are mentally and emotionally big enough to grasp such a cosmic program as the Founder of Christianity unquestionably taught?

Had the writers of the Gospels interpolated such a teaching they would have been careful to give us a thoroughly harmonious doctrine free from the difficulties lying on the face of the record. These very surface incongruities prove the authenticity of the sayings of Jesus as to His Second Coming.

In the second place the doctrine clarifies itself as

the New Testament is developed. This would have been impossible with a man-made Parousia. Its very inconsistencies would have developed into a wild and fantastic apocalyptic. As it is, and as we shall later see, the eschatology of Jesus, properly interpreted, accords with the deepest implications of modern science and philosophy.

In the third place, the last documents of the New Testament, written after the destruction of Jerusalem by one who professes to have been a hearer and an eye-witness, proclaims in its highest possible spiritual form the same doctrine of the Parousia that we find in the Synoptic Gospels and the Pauline Epistles.

Finally, the belief in the Second Advent has exercised a most powerful influence on the mind and heart of the Church, and through it has affected mightily the moral history of mankind. The judgment seat of Christ as the goal of human history has been the most potent ethical force ever among men. To claim that such conceptions were tacked onto the teachings of Jesus is to admit that they were more powerful than His own ideas and absorbed them. And this is to confess that the idea of a Consummation finds something ineradicably consonant with itself in human nature!

The sanest solution is the natural one. And the only conclusion warranted by all the evidence is that Jesus did teach the doctrine of His personal Return, a second manifestation in glory to bring to an end the present economy, physical and moral, and to usher in through a process of judgment and a regeneration of all things the Kingdom of God in all its fullness among men and angels.

PART II

The Answer of the World Order

"The world is one and admits of only one ultimate principle of explanation."—*Edward Caird.*

"Though Reason cannot through Faith's mysteries see,
It sees that there and such they be;
Leads to heaven's door, and there does humbly keep,
And there through chinks and keyholes peep;
Though it, like Moses, by a sad command
Must not come into the Holy Land,
Yet thither it infallibly does guide,
And from afar 'tis all descried."

—*Cowley.*

"The evolutions of matter, with the physical sciences in which the material world is interpreted in faith, are subordinate and ancillary to the ethical and religious faith that is at the foundation of all our insight. The starry heavens may dissolve, but neither the divine constitution of the universe, nor the moral agents contained in it, can thus pass away. More or less enlightened Faith in the omnipresence of omniscient and omnipotent Goodness is the tacit postulate of all human experience of reality."—*Alexander Campbell Fraser.*

"Philosophy is more a matter of passionate vision than one of logic."—*William James.*

I

THE ANSWER OF THE PHYSICAL ORDER

"Nature is an evolution, of which infinite Perfection is both the motive force and the highest goal (Aristotle, Descartes, Hegel)."—*Weber*, "*History of Philosophy.*"

"All things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things hold together."—*St. Paul* (*Col. i.* 16, 17).

MODERN thinking has been busy trying to break up man's conception of the physical universe. It has been enabled to show that much which passes for static reality is in the last analysis mental construction. Every sensation which reaches the mind through nerve excitation must arrange itself under the forms of thought. So careful a thinker as Huxley saw this, for he said, "All the phenomena of nature are, in their ultimate analysis, known to us only as facts of consciousness." It has been demonstrated by psychologists that consciousness, in its ordinary conception, is not the simple unity which it is generally believed to be. And yet after its complex constituents have been pared away there remains a unity of conscious knowledge, a selfhood, which "is the very core of our psychical being. About it are gathered all the joys and all the miseries of life. However much a critical philosophy may shake our confidence in its

implication, the fact of its existence is each for us the one absolutely indubitable fact."[1]

On the other hand, man has never been able to get rid of the actuality of the physical universe. It persists and produces pain while he passes. The records of the human intellect prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that while the forces underlying phenomena are ceaselessly active there are countless forms in nature which have suffered little or no change in thousands of years. As to the ultimate reality underlying physical phenomena philosophers have battled long. The conclusion accepted by most modern thinkers is that the meaning of the World Ground is to be found in the Personality of a Being, whom we call God. Various attempts have been made to think out the relation between God and His world. The most notable attempt in modern times was that of Hegel, but the logical drift of his system ends in Pantheism. This is to confuse the Master Workman of the Universe with His tools and the material that He uses. Kant, the most critical intellect of all time, pointed out the unlikelihood of this connection ever being solved. He questioned whether a full science of metaphysics would be possible, and the same thought has been put forth by a more recent thinker: "To know the 'ultimate how' of any part or relation of parts, of diversity, of unity in diversity, I must be present at the dawn of creation —the passing of the One into the Many, and feel the thrill and intuite the process of the Creative Energy."[2]

With all their speculations neither science nor

[1] Angell, "Psychology," p. 457.

[2] Laurie, "Synthetica," Vol. I, p. 304.

philosophy have been enabled to penetrate beyond the words of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God. So that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear." The provinces of science and philosophy are clearly outlined, the one dealing with the laws of physical phenomena, the other seeking ultimate meanings through a knowledge of these laws and by the aid of Faith.

Therefore our first inquiry is with the light which science may be able to throw on the great doctrine which we saw so completely announced in the New Testament—the Consummation of all things and the final manifestation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In the nature of physical phenomena we cannot expect that light to be strong, steady and clear. And yet the very shadows and imperfections of the physical universe, properly interpreted, point towards an ultimate Parousia of Divine Presence.

To the close observer the physical order presents two faces. One is the aspect of imperfection. Physical forces perfect the physical life of man and then they destroy it. They preserve for ages the cold statuary and unthinking diamond, but they slay without mercy a Keats and drown a Shelley. It is evident that the physical order, wonderful and mighty as it is, lacks something. St. Paul perceived this, for in the eighth chapter of Romans he writes: "The creation was subjected to frailty, not of its own will, but by reason of Him, who hath subjected it, in the hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God."

Yet while imperfection and death reign in the physical universe, there are everywhere gleams and hints of perfection. The fundamental tendency of nature is towards crystallization or perfection of form. In fact most of the minute manifestations of the physical order are well-nigh perfect. The microscope reveals infinite forms of beauty hidden from the unaided eye. Countless diatoms are wondrous in form and colour. The markings of a polyp's cell or the exquisite pattern of a butterfly's egg might furnish a design for a great cathedral window. Almost every wayside blossom is perfection itself, pregnant and fragrant with poetic thought. So that while the general aspect of the physical universe is that of destruction, everywhere there are hints and prophecies of perfection. Goethe perceived this, for he said that when he stood alone amid the scenes of nature, she seemed to be an imprisoned captive sighing to be redeemed.

When directed by mind the physical order is capable of infinite perfection. The effect of mind upon nature is seen in the history of civilization. Man has harnessed physical forces, great and small, to do his will. The very elements which primitive man feared and worshipped civilized man has harnessed for the production of comfort and beauty. Nowhere is this so effectively displayed as in a great World's Exposition, where the ends of the earth have contributed their choicest products. There we see the effect of mind on the physical order. The tendency to decay is arrested, human life is prolonged and enriched, and the conclusion is forced on us that Perfect Mind would have no difficulty in changing

all the destructive tendencies of nature into beneficent channels, eliminating entirely death and decay.

This last conclusion is intensified by recent discoveries of new and unsuspected forces within the physical order. The old mechanical idea of nature as a machine, "which can be explained as we account for a combination of wheels and levers," has passed away. The present conception looks upon the physical order as a manifestation of wonderful and but little understood forces, and possessing vast possibilities when directed by mind. One who has astonished the world by his manipulation of plant life has recently said, "All my investigations have led me away from the idea of a dead, material universe, tossed about by various forces, to that of a universe, which is absolutely all force, life, soul, thought, or whatever we may choose to call it. Every atom, molecule, plant, animal, or planet is only an aggregation of organized unit forces held in place by stronger forces, thus holding them for a time latent, though teeming with inconceivable power. All life on our planet is, so to speak, just the outer fringe of this infinite ocean of force. The universe is not half dead, but all alive."[1]

This is one aspect which the physical universe presents to the scientific mind—a vast system of forces pregnant with life. The other aspect is that which has been so brilliantly set forth by Professor Bergson,—the imprisonment of consciousness by finite forms. His whole philosophy he has summed up in one pregnant sentence: "Let it suffice to say that I see in the whole evolution of life on our planet an

[1] Luther Burbank.

effort of this essentially creative force to arrive, by traversing matter, at something which is only realized in man, and which, moreover, even in man, is realized only imperfectly."[1] These are the two ultimate aspects of the physical order—perfection and imperfection.

So far neither science nor philosophy has been able to resolve this antinomy. Coleridge, the most penetrating of English thinkers, once wrote, "This must be the one great end of nature, her ultimate production of the highest and most comprehensive individuality." Since the goal of the physical order seems to be a human individual, then it must be interpreted in terms of the highest individuality. That individual, by common consent, is Jesus Christ. The late Professor Shaler pronounced Him "the crown of the cosmic process." And one of the most eminent of living botanists, speaking of the attitude of scientific men towards Jesus, said, "Pressing the search for the completest exemplification of the most effective life, the lines all focus in the person of Jesus Christ, and this quite apart from any peculiar claim made for Him. I have found absolute unanimity in the judgment that no life, in all that makes for effectiveness, has approached that of Jesus Christ."[2]

Science is slowly beginning to take account of what Dr. Newman Smyth recently said it must do—"take account of the perfection of life in the person of Jesus Christ." The Man of Galilee was not only the supreme product of life, but He was enabled to lay His hands on the ultimate potencies of the physical order

[1] "Life and Consciousness," *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. I, p. 38.
[2] Prof. J. M. Coulter.

and bend them to His will. It is a singular attitude of mind that admits His miracles in the sphere of mind and morals and denies them in a more plastic and less disobedient medium! Lotze has said, "The entire interior consistency of the cohering order of nature, upon which the natural sciences are supported, is conceded as a matter of fact; but taken as a whole and at large it is regarded as a system of mutually conditioning actualities, utterly dependent upon the divine power." An eminent authority on electricity has recently argued that there is a tendency of ether to gain energy at the expense of matter. Therefore the universe, if uncontrolled, could not form a conservative system. As the ether gained energy at the expense of matter there would be a tendency towards physical death in which no further phenomenal change could be possible.[1]

It is significant of the miracles of Jesus that with a few exceptions they arrested the processes of decay and death. If, as He claimed, He was in perfect unison with the Will of His Father, in His miracles He did but adumbrate the continuous processes by which the worlds are kept young. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." But He came forth for a deeper and holier purpose than to merely arrest the tendency of decay here and there. He came forth to arrest and cure the moral corruption of mankind. His power to arrest decay in the physical order was but a symbol and sign of His power to heal the sin-sick soul. To this end, that His hearers might know that the Son of Man had authority on

[1] De Tunzelman, "Mechanical Theory and Problem of the Universe," p. 567.

earth to forgive sins, He bade the palsied man lying before Him to rise, take up his bed and walk.

Jesus Christ alone fully explains nature. As illuminated by Him, the physical order is seen to be a vast and intricate system of mighty forces, flashing forth here and there gleams of perfection, yet whose general drift is towards decay and dissolution, save where this tendency is arrested by a perfect mental and moral will. We see fulfilled in Him the prophecy of the physical order—natural forces thoroughly subservient to intelligent ethical will. Just as a small plot of ground yields to the intelligent garden its rich returns, so the whole physical universe seems to be waiting the ploughshare of the Lord of Life. He was Himself a kind of first-fruits of creation's harvest. "Afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming."

Objection has been made that the orthodox doctrine of His Second Coming is too spectacular, a kind of "raw, elemental surprise." But this is to misconceive the Parousia. According to the New Testament it is a drawing near of the Divine Life, the Return of the Great Companion, the arresting of the processes of decay and the transfiguration of the material into the spiritual. In a certain sense the transfiguration of the physical order is already taking place. Herbert Spencer very truly observed that "scientific progress is a gradual transfiguration of nature." This has been due almost entirely to Christianity. Where its Gospel has not penetrated men still fear and worship nature. In Christian lands men harness nature and transfigure it, dim adumbrations of their Master's work and will.

Those who contend that the Second Advent, as set

forth in the Scriptures, is too spectacular and unbecoming the Lord of Life, forget the history of the physical order. Science plainly teaches us that in the physical order are unexplained crises or as Cope calls them, "expression points." Shaler says, "By a critical point I mean a station or period in the series of changing conditions at which a new mode of action is suddenly introduced. . . . At the freezing point an instantaneous revolution takes place as the substance passes from the liquid to the solid state; from a condition in which it is the type of instability and the vehicle of the earth's activities, it changes to a rigid form in which it appears to be capable of no movement except that derived from the gravitative impulse. . . . We unjustifiably conceive the processions of phenomena in the physical world as going forward, as it were, on straight lines; but the foregoing considerations, though only a small part of those which could be adduced, indicate to us that we have in the mechanism a provision for the most sudden departures from the direction which events may have hitherto followed. This world is thus to be conceived of as a place of surprises which take place under natural law, but are quite as revolutionary as if they were the products of chance, or a result arising from the immediate intervention of the Supreme Power!"[1]

It is impossible for science to predicate anything in reference to the future of the physical order. We know that these "critical points" in the world process are largely dependent on the presence or the absence of heat. Whether there shall be an increase or

[1] "The Interpretation of Nature."

a decrease in the future no man can tell. Just now the discoveries in radio-activity would seem to point to an increase through metal decomposition. But man's view-point is so limited that he cannot forecast from scientific data the future of the physical universe. He must pass up the problem to the philosopher and the theologian.

Yet there are prophecies in the physical order which speak volumes to certain types of mind. In the tendency of nature to perfection even amid the vast and seemingly cruel imperfections, in the response of nature to mind, in the plastic power of Mind over material forms, we have a prophecy of "new heavens and a new earth." As one of nature's seers, who died young, has written of the Snowdrop, "All around is troubled; the beauty of the snow has vanished, whilst that of Spring has not yet arrived; and here is a promise that the lower form of purity shall be replaced by a higher and more perfect, the purity of a nobler form of life—better, as the flower is better than the snow-crystal, the man than the child, the sinner redeemed than the angels, if such there are, who have never needed repentance. And this less perfect old must perish, that from its death may arise the more perfect new. . . . Snow and ice are cold, death-like, dreary. Here is a flower which preserves one of the choicest beauties of the snow, and shows what we might otherwise have deemed impossible—that this beauty can be made compatible with life of a more active kind. This is but one of the lower steps of the ladder which must end in heaven, pointing us to a union of happinesses which cannot coexist on earth, where activity des-

troys contemplation, the fruit, the flower, and the love of near relationship forbids the deepest kind." [1]

Those who decry the suddenness of the Last Advent as too "Spectacular," forget the spectacular character of many things involved in the physical order—the destruction wrought by fire and flood, plague and pestilence, earthquakes and eruptions, tidal waves and tempest. A world composed of finite and infinite elements must at times necessarily be spectacular. The birth of everything is spectacular. A long process of development usually ends in a sudden and spectacular crisis. The ordinary course of nature is agleam with apocalyptic hints. Every sunrise is a symbol of the greater Dawn. For as has been said by a recent writer, "The processes of nature are a parable of the Divine Mind." [2] And just as the human mind takes a deep and pleasing satisfaction in beholding some great spectacle where a victor over nature or evil forces is crowned, so the open triumph of His Son cannot be displeasing to the heart of the Eternal Father. And so in the wondrous glory of the dawn, in the crowning of kings and inauguration of presidents, in the public tributes to men of genius and achievement, we behold a prefiguration of the final triumph of Him who is first among many brethren.

If, as He predicted, the inhabitants of heaven shall bear Him company, shall not the physical universe drape itself in glory and beauty to meet His manifestation. At times nature does seem to put on for one brief moment her apocalyptic robes. Such a scene

[1] Forbes Watson, "Flowers and Gardens," pp. 14, 15.

[2] Dewick, "Primitive Christian Eschatology."

has been vividly portrayed by that wizard of the West, John Muir. Describing a sunrise on Glacier Bay, Alaska, he says, "After we had seen the unveiling of the majestic peaks and glaciers that evening, and their baptism in the down-pouring sunbeams, it was inconceivable that nature could have anything finer to show us. Nevertheless, compared with what was coming the next morning, all that was as nothing. As far as we could see, the lovely dawn gave no promise of anything uncommon. Its most impressive features were the frosty clearness of the sky, and a deep, brooding calm, made all the more striking by the intermittent thunder of the bergs. The sunrise we did not see at all, for we were beneath the shadow of the fiord cliffs; but in the midst of our studies we were startled by the appearance of a red light burning with a strange, unearthly splendour on the topmost peak of the Fairweather Mountains. Instead of vanishing as suddenly as it had appeared, it spread and spread until the whole range down to the level of the glaciers was filled with the celestial fire. In colour it was at first a vivid crimson, with a thick furred appearance, as fine as the alpen glow, yet indescribably rich and deep—not in the least like a garment or mere external flush or bloom through which one might expect to see the rocks or snow, but every mountain apparently glowing from the heart like molten metal fresh from a furnace. Beneath the frosty shadows of the fiord we stood hushed and awe-stricken, gazing at the holy vision; and had we seen the heavens opened and God made manifest, our attention could not have been more tremendously strained. When the highest peak began to burn, it

did not seem to be steeped in sunshine, however glorious, but rather as if it had been thrust into the body of the sun itself. Then the supernal fire slowly descending, with a sharp line of demarkation separating it from the cold, shaded region beneath, peak after peak, with their spires and ridges and cascading glaciers, caught the heavenly glow, until all the mighty host stood transfigured, hushed, and thoughtful, as if awaiting the coming of the Lord." [1]

One of the objections to the Christian doctrine of the Parousia is based on the seeming magnitude of the physical universe and the possibility of other inhabited worlds. Man amid his present limitations is dazed by the bigness of stellar space. But space is partly an intuition and partly ideal construction. The present sense of immensity is due largely to man's immersion in a finite world order. From another view-point, that of a disembodied spirit, or a spirit with a body adapted to the infinite order, the present magnitude of the physical universe would shrink into insignificance. Hence a sound philosophy will always refuse to be bound by discoveries in astral physics. This point has been well stated by Prof. R. B. Perry: "To pretend to speak for the universe in terms of the narrow and abstract predictions of astronomy is to betray a bias of mind that is little less provincial and unimaginative than the most naive anthropomorphism. What that residual cosmos which looms beyond the border of knowledge shall in time bring forth no man that has yet been born can say. That it may overbalance and remake the little world of things known, and falsify every present prophecy,

[1] *The Century*, Vol. 28, p. 237.

no man can doubt. It is as consistent with rigorous thought to greet it as a promise of salvation, as to dread it as a portent of doom. And if it be granted that in either case it is a question of over-belief, of the hazard of faith, no devoted soul can hesitate."[1]

The passing of the present physical order is not such a serious problem, even from a scientific standpoint, when we remember that the chief element in the sun and stars seems to be hydrogen. And the doctrine of the New Testament is not so much that of destruction as regeneration and transfiguration. "I John saw a new heavens and a new earth."

The question of life in other parts of the present universe is one about which we may well forbear to dogmatize, even though the foremost of living Darwinians, Professor Wallace, has argued strongly against such a possibility. At present there is not the slightest evidence of the existence of sentient life on any planet save our earth. If it should turn out that other worlds in space are inhabited by moral creatures akin to man in nature, we may rest assured that God has provided some scheme of redemption for them. And if such there be, then they too must long with us for the parting of the vail of the finite and "the regeneration of all things."

[1] "Present Philosophical Tendencies," p. 347.

II

THE ANSWER OF THE MENTAL ORDER

"Primarily the intelligible world is not an achievement but a prophecy."—*Kant.*

"We know in part, and we prophesy in part."—*St. Paul.*

THE mental order is a synthesis and an interpretation of the facts in consciousness. These facts are given partly through sensation—experience of the physical order, and partly through the combination of the facts of sensation with the mental and emotional ideas which arise as these facts obtrude in consciousness.

So interwoven are sensations and mental elaboration that it is almost impossible to trace the lines of difference as these waves of consciousness sweep back and forth. To speak more accurately, it is a stream of consciousness carrying a surprising fullness of physical and mental facts. The selfhood, which is associated with each stream of consciousness, is partly determined by the drift due to vast hereditary forces, to personal environment, and also to no small extent by the exercise of the power of self-direction.

On the surface of this stream of consciousness there is a reflection of the world order, simple and uncomplicated or complex and wondrously illuminated according to the "lights and shadows" of each individual life. Hence to secure the most accurate picture of the mental world order we must make a

composite photograph of these images as they are reflected in the consciousness of those personalities most closely approaching the normal standard. Now in order to get such a group we ought to take the wisest and best of each race, such as Plato, Philo, Kant, Confucius, and after securing a mental picture of the world tint it with the colouring of those significant souls, who have been conspicuous for service and sainthood, such as Moses, Socrates, Paul, Francis Xavier, Luther, Wesley, Livingstone, "Chinese" Gordon, Father Damien, and Florence Nightingale.

Such a composite picture, if such could be secured, would not be an untrue reflection of the true world order, for it would be a reflection on a sensitized and purified consciousness of life at its best. There would be at least one thing common to all these personalities—a profound sense of the gap between the present world order and that perfect world to which the soul aspires. Perhaps the greatest contribution, which Greek thought made to men, was its grasp of the wide divergence between the present order and a perfect world order, between the real and the ideal. This gap lies at the bottom of Plato's doctrine of ideas, of the Persian or Gnostic conception of æons, of Kant's great critical scheme, and in fact of every system which takes account of all the facts of life. "Even if philosophy can grasp some Idea of Good—some principle which unites all the sciences, because it transcends their limited point of view—yet it must always be impossible for us to trace the operation of this principle in the endless detail of changing phenomena which make up our daily life. The utmost knowledge we can attain still leaves the ordinary

course of the world for us a mass of contingencies, of accidental juxtapositions, of which we can only say that it is, and not why it is, still less that it is best for us." [1]

Therefore the mental order is made up of an infinite number of psychic facts, derived from sensation and mental elaboration, and a group of fundamental ideas. There has been much speculation as to these fundamental ideas from Aristotle down to Kant. It is probable that Kant's scheme of these basal concepts or categories may be open to criticism and still further resolved, yet at least three fundamental ideas seem immovably embedded in consciousness. These are Unity, which is a necessary concept whenever sensation discloses relation; Purpose, which is a higher category and by which alone thought can complete itself; and Possibility of Perfection, which is largely an æsthetic category arising from the movement of purposive life to larger unity. There are other important categories but these three are basic, especially that of unity. "Apart from the tendency to organization and unity, there is no life; and this tendency, in its widest sweep, is exhibited in the gradual ascent of life from its simplest to its most complex forms." [2] Hence it has been said, "Philosophy's one aim is to see the world in the light of unity." [3] In fact this is the one great task of philosophy—the relation of the facts of life to the fundamental ideas of the soul. The fact that man can be

[1] Caird, "Evolution of Theology in Greek Philosophers," Vol. I, p. 224.

[2] Watson, "Outline of Philosophy," p. 122.

[3] Nash, "Genesis of the Social Conscience," p. 298.

cognizant of the passing phenomena of life with their limitations and contradictions, and at the same time rise above these limitations and contradictions into a thought world of unity, purpose, and perfection, is proof that he is a citizen of two worlds, the finite and the infinite. As the late Professor Laurie has so well put it: "Man as the head of a finite world is not restricted to the finite, but, on the contrary, has the Infinite insistently thrust on him in Feeling, and also in all knowing of the conditioned. In the root-experience—Pure Feeling of Being Unconditioned, in his further experience of the same feeling as immanent in sense, Man is permeated and surrounded with that which is not less but more than knowledge, and is compelled to the further affirmation of that which is above all knowledge. He is thus, from the first and always, involved in the Universal,—a conscious sharer in the Divine Life in his feeling, his sentience, and his knowing. To be consciously at home with the Infinite is the Privilege of Man."[1]

We have seen that among the fundamental ideas of the soul are Unity, Purpose, and the Possibility of Perfection. These three imply cause. Hence they force us to predicate of the present world order an underlying causal unity. Plato saw this but was unable to define it. Philo called it the Logos, the Eternal Word or Reason. John in the prelude of his Gospel says, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and

[1] "Synthetica."

the life was the light of men." The Christian doctrine of the Logos alone supplies us with an adequate explanation of the personality of man. There is in every man, feeble and flickering though it be, "a light that never was on sea or land"—the illumination of the Archetypal Reason, the faint reflection in his own consciousness of those deep and glorious ideas which in Jesus Christ flash forth in all their fullness and beauty. This is one of the secrets of His perennial appeal to man. Those who can be persuaded to gaze upon Him for a time see in Him the perfection of themselves, the higher and permanent elements of their being shining in Him in unclouded beauty and splendour. "The secret of the Messias is the secret of man."

Not only does Jesus reveal man to himself, but in His filial attitude towards the cause of all He reveals God to men. He carries the hopes and aspirations of humanity upward till they reach the heart of God the Father. And the sign of the completed journey is sending forth of the Spirit, whereby the terror-stricken conscience is pardoned of past offenses and trespasses, and the kiss of love and peace is breathed upon the soul. "He hath sent forth the Spirit into our hearts, whereby we cry, Abba Father."

In Christian experience the spiritual ideas common to all men are transfigured from shadow and weakness into joyous life. So stupendous is this change that it is described by Paul as a passing from death unto life. The supreme test of this change is an abounding and unmeasured love for God and all His creatures.

But Jesus Christ does more for man than the impartation of personal salvation. In His own life He illustrates and by His sacrificial death He explicates the real meaning of the present world order. Life is not merely an ascending series of more complex organization. It is for man, at least, a preparation for and a period of moral trial. Lotze, at the close of his great book on metaphysics, wrote, "When now several decades since, I ventured on a still more imperfect attempt, I closed it with the dictum that the true beginning of Metaphysics lies in Ethics. I admit that the expression is not exact; but I still feel certain of being on the right track, when I seek in that which *should* be the ground of that which *is*." Professor Wundt has practically arrived at the same conclusion. A metaphysical system which does not begin or end in ethics is foredoomed to ruin. To exclude the most tremendous moral fact in human life, Jesus Christ, and attempt to construct an explanation of the present order without Him, is to invite disaster. Such a system has no bridge for the gap between the finite and the infinite, no solution of life's terrible antinomies, no answer to the categories of Unity, Purpose and Perfection. This is well set forth by Professor Rashdall, "The philosophical argument of Mr. R. B. Haldane in 'The Pathway to Reality,' and the purely biological argument of Dr. John Haldane in his two lectures on 'Life and Mechanism,' and still more recently the brilliant and important work of M. Bergson, 'L'Evolution Creatrice,' have, it seems to me, abundantly shown that it is as impossible as ever to explain even the growth of a plant without supposing that in all organic nature there is a striving

towards an end. But the argument from design, though it testifies to purpose in the universe, tells us nothing about the nature of that purpose. Purpose is one thing; benevolent purpose is another. Nobody's estimate of the comparative amount of happiness and misery in the world is worth much; but for my own part, if I trusted simply to empirical evidence, I should not be disposed to do more than slightly attenuate the pessimism of the Pessimists. At all events, Nature is far too 'red in tooth and claw' to permit of our basing an argument for a benevolent deity upon the contemplation of the facts of animal and human life. There is but one source from which such an idea can possibly be derived—from the evidence of our moral consciousness." [1]

Therefore any proper metaphysics must embrace an inquiry into the moral order of the world. Hence we are compelled to transfer our quest to "The Answer of the Moral Order." But before doing so it would seem wise to glance at a few side-lights gleaming along the mental order. We have seen that the mental order gives us the fundamental ideas of Unity, Purpose and Perfection. These imply cause and culmination. We have also seen that Jesus Christ, as the Logos, clarifies the conception of an underlying unity of all things despite the passing contradictions of sense. Not only does contemplation of Him have this mental effect, but actually while on this earth He bridged the gap between the finite and the infinite. He is the only mortal whose life bears the stamp of completeness. The contradictions of a passing world seemed unable to confuse His

[1] "Philosophy and Religion," p. 61.

outlook or disturb His deep serenity of spirit. He somehow caused the infinite to blossom perfectly amid the dissolving blasts of the finite. His words, spoken amid the limitations of Jewish life, have a fullness of significance for men in every age and clime. Even death, that terrible and cruel thing which closes every human life, by Him was transfigured into a Throne of Life. Out of His Easter tomb blossomed a triumph of Hope that has redeemed many nations. He alone is the solution of the contradiction between the finite and the infinite, the bridge between the passing world of phenomena and the eternal order of ideas, the Healer of the deep wound in human thought as well as the great Physician of sin-sick souls. He is Himself the Prophecy of the Parousia, when the gap between the fragmentary and the Perfect shall be closed forever, and the whole universe, heading up towards Him, is transformed and transfigured into an apocalypse of deathless love and fadeless beauty, of which the mental order in its deepest movements is a dim adumbration.

III

THE ANSWER OF THE MORAL ORDER

"I think that we must look to ethics to supply the corner-stone of metaphysics, of our final and comprehensive view of the universe."—*Professor Wundt.*

"He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—*Acts xvii.* 31.

MAN is a moral being. His power over his own act and his sense of responsibility to supreme laws lift him out of the plane of the purely physical into the realm of the "right" and the "wrong." There has been much discussion, especially in recent years, as to the origin of this moral sense. There are those who would resolve it into a mere result of the long evolutionary process. Others see in conscience the voice of God.

The truth lies in a mean between these two extremes. That man's moral life is largely made up of maxims gathered from experience in the struggle for existence is unquestionably true. But the binding force of the moral judgment is something unique and underived. The moral ideal grips the soul with a power unknown either in nature or in purely mental operations. When it speaks all hint of other possible modes of action disappears and the soul is left face to

face with the angel of duty. As Kant says, "There is an imperative, which, irrespective of every ulterior end or aim, commands categorically."

Some like Darwin have denied the imperiousness of the moral sense, and would reduce it to the consciousness of the existence of a persistent instinct, though Darwin was puzzled when he came to explain the emotions associated with the philanthropic efforts to preserve the weak. The truth is, the purely evolutionary ethic is lacking in thorough analysis. Its portrait of savage man needs filling in and retouching. There is not such a gap between primitive man and modern mankind as is sometimes assumed. This has been very clearly pointed out by McDougall in his "Social Psychology." Much of our boasted civilization is but a manifestation of primitive instincts. And in one respect at least the sense of obligation bore more heavily on primitive man. Nature was not to him a vast system of physical law, but the playground of spiritual forces, good and bad. His struggle with these forces was keen and intense. Marett says: "His universe is thus a moral order, and the savage is a savage just because he is too ready to cope with physical necessities merely by means of moral control or suasion. So much is he already in spirit, if not in effect, the lord of creation that he can imagine no part of creation that is purely unmoral and mechanical in its operation." [1]

So that strictly speaking primitive man was in a sense more moral than modern man. His mental world was largely a world of fearful obligations. It is true that these obligations frequently gathered

[1] "Ency. of Religion and Ethics," Vol. V, p. 435.

about and sanctioned the most horrible practices, but it is proof that he felt within him the same *imperium* which manifests itself in a more enlightened manner in the modern man. As to the ultimate origin of this sense of obligation it is not wise to dogmatize, though it is probably in the last analysis a fundamental category arising in unison with the category of possibility of perfection and the sense of freedom projected against a world that smites with pain and blesses with good. It cannot be a mere deduction from experience because of "the feeling of unrest caused by the pressure of the ideal upon the actual will." When we have solved the rise of the ideal, then we may be in a position to say the last word as to the origin of our moral sense.

Whatever its origin, the power and universality of the moral sense give it a spiritual and teleological significance that is well-nigh equal to the voice of God in the soul. For as Butler tersely puts it, "Had it strength, as it has right; had it power, as it has manifest authority; it would absolutely govern the world." Butler's insistence on the supremacy of conscience led the late Professor Sidgwick, the most eminent of English Utilitarians, to review more closely the Intuitionist contention, and in a lecture, printed in the introduction to the sixth edition of his "Method of Ethics," he says, "The strength and vehemence of Butler's condemnation of pure Utilitarianism, in so cautious a writer, naturally impressed me much. And I had myself become, as I had to admit to myself, an Intuitionist to a certain extent. For the supreme rule of aiming at the general happiness, as I had come to see, must rest on a fundamental

moral intuition, if I was to recognize it as binding at all."

The necessity for "supreme laws of moral conduct which are obligatory upon every person" has been clearly set forth by Lotze. In answer to the purely evolutionistic view, which says that "man ought to do that for which he is destined," he says, "In order to do this it would be necessary for us to know the supreme end of the entire course of the world; and further to be able accurately to fix the position which the human race occupies in this plan of the whole, as well as the performances which are incumbent upon it on this account: finally, it would also be necessary for us—since it is always the individual man who is the subject of the conduct—to be able to define besides the particular place which every individual occupies within the human race. Now it would follow from what is said above, that the content of the supreme moral laws could be discovered only by means of an immeasurable task upon our cognition,—such as we all concede to be possible of accomplishment at all by human powers, only with a slight approximation. But—quite the contrary—it is obvious that fundamental ethical laws, if they are to be of any value, must be immediately obvious and certain to the individual man. That is to say: There must be a voice of conscience which gives direction in particular cases concerning the praiseworthiness or blameworthiness of an action presented before it. In what manner these particular actions admit being combined with one another in order to produce a collective condition of humanity which is inserted in the plan of the world,—this may continue to be the

object of further scientific cognition; but no investigation into this question can even begin until such individual judgments are established."

The fundamental defect in most modern studies of ethics is the inattention to the relations of man's soul with the Eternal Spirit. They bulked large in the life of primitive man; they have been the driving power of modern civilization. As Harnack says, "The greatest events and changes in the history of the world have had their origin in religion—not in the public religion, but in the purely personal, in that secret religion which remains hidden in the individual, until it suddenly jets forth as if from a newly breaking spring." To treat religion as a survival of animism is not only to give an imperfect analysis of the soul life of primitive man, but it is to ignore the deepest springs of action and to set aside a vast body of experience which possesses every claim to reality. In fact, strictly speaking, no true science of morals is possible unless a religious basis of life is assumed. "Ethics must either perfect themselves in religion, or disintegrate into Hedonism."[1]

Now a religion, which shall satisfy the demands of human life, must be one that first of all shall orientate man by revealing enough of the unseen and eternal to enlighten him as to the meaning and purpose of his existence, to comfort him in his sense of failure and sin by forgiving him, to inspire to a new and larger effort by strengthening him mentally and ethically, to furnish him with motives sufficiently inspiring and ennobling, so that his individual life,

[1] Martineau, "Study of Religion," Vol. I, p. 24.

his family life, his social life shall adumbrate the spirit and principles of that religion.

Tremendous is the task of such a religion. Only a God could devise it; only a God could enact it so that it would burn its way beyond the barriers of man's frailty and sin into the deeps of his ultimate consciousness. When we consider how pitiful human life is at best, how painfully and sorrowfully man has toiled across the endless centuries, "asking questions and projecting infinite possibilities to which the only reponse was the brutal and stupid answer of the grave," then we begin to realize that this one needed religion must of itself be a religion of pain, suffering and death. Otherwise it could not strongly react on man. And yet this religion must not be weak, its very weakness must be turned into strength, for man needs mighty comfort in his warfare here. From the lowest creatures up to the highest there is one incessant struggle for a foothold on the margin of existence. When one thinks of the sufferings of animals, preying on each other, and the fact that the vast majority of human beings pass a miserable life in the struggle with the powers of nature and the selfishness and cruelty of their fellow men, it is not difficult to understand the thought which prompted a great preacher to exclaim, "The world is an awful world after all. No man would ever have been fool enough to live in it, I think, if he had been given the chance."[1]

The one religion must fortify the soul against the dreadfulness of human life by showing a soul against whom all the hosts of dissolution and darkness raged

[1] Thompson, "The World and the Wrestlers," p. 41.

in vain. It must possess the divine power of resolving the worst into a good. It must make the steps of pain and anguish contributory to character. The rage of demons must be turned into angels' songs, and the night of death must glow with the far but certain radiance of the Resurrection.

Above all the one religion must vindicate the moral order of the world. This is perhaps the crux of the whole matter. And it must vindicate the past as well as the present and future. No betterment of social conditions can atone for the sufferings of the past, for the millions who have wasted breath in the cruel struggle with man and nature. There must be somewhere an assize where the wrongs of this world can be righted. No one is more keenly conscious of this than the men who are set to administer human justice. One, who until his recent death was a member of what is perhaps the highest and most powerful earthly tribunal, thus expressed himself: "The Roman patriot Cato, facing suicide, exclaimed:

> " ' If there's a Power above us—
> And there is, all Nature cries aloud
> Through all her works—He must delight in virtue;
> And that which He delights in must be happy.
> But when? or where? This world was made for Cæsar.'

Forty years of judicial life, as varied as that which falls to the lot of any, have given me an answer to Cato's question. I have looked into the faces of persons on trial before me for alleged crimes, or litigants in civil cases, have searched every item of testimony which the laws of evidence allowed to be introduced, in the hope of gathering therefrom some

knowledge of the influences which the past of heredity and environment have cast, and finding but little to guide or instruct, have yielded to the necessity of determining rights on the basis of only the concrete and visible facts. I have been over and over again impressed with the limitations of finite nature, and longed to know something of these unseen and unknown influences which have brought the individual to his place before me. Conscious of these ever-present limitations, I have asked whether this is the best that God has done for man? And the answer which has come out of my long experience on the bench is that somewhere and some time all the failures of human justice will be made good. . . . I have learned to see in the cross the visible symbol of faultless justice, and in the resurrection of Christ the prophecy and truth of its final triumph."[1]

The conception which the New Testament gives us of Christ's judgment-seat may be too spectacular for pale mystic minds, who are withdrawn from the world and see it only through a mist, but to men who live in the world and in daily contact with its selfishness, sin, and brutality, there comes an insistent demand for a manifestation of the Supreme Judge, One who shall unite Perfect Justice with Infinite Love. Our human courts, fraught with the issues of life and death, are adumbrations of the last Assize, to which so many majestic souls have been forced to appeal.

It was a profound remark of Dorner: "Conscience contains already the materials of an eschatology." If conscience, or the moral order in which man is placed demands of him an effort to rid himself of evil, then

[1] Justice Brewer, "The Religion of a Jurist."

man, as a moral being has the right to demand that the Author of all shall some day remove the limitations against which his spirit strives. And not only the imperfections in creation but the malign forces against which he has had to fight so strenuously. "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." It is the fashion now in some quarters to sneer at the New Testament doctrine of evil spirits as a belief of the race's childhood. But men driven by demoniac suggestion still abound, and neither the neurologist nor the psychologist have been able to solve the problem. The late Professor James shortly before his death put forth tentatively a theory of "parasitic demons"—beings oppressed by the vastness of the other world and anxious to return and take up their abode in men and women! Without entering on a discussion of this grave problem it may be said that the doctrine of demons has more to uphold it than some students are willing to admit. Every sound principle of philosophy points to a hierarchy of beings above man. If they were created free moral beings then in all probability some abused that freedom and lost the vision of God. And one of the justifications for the complex and seemingly cruel world order in which man finds himself is the implication that this vast system was designed to protect man from the influence of these fallen beings. Unless there be some mighty Tragedy of Sin in the Universe against which the Author of the world is striving, then it is difficult to explain satisfactorily much of the sin and suffering in

this world. If human nature alone needs such a vast and intricate system to develop and redeem it, then it is difficult to escape the conclusion that human nature is in its essence evil and has to be purified by an almost endless process of animal suffering and human woe!

But the Christian doctrine of the Universe resolves this, as it does all dark problems, not by ignoring them, but by pointing beyond them to the final triumph of the good. It recognizes the awful Tragedy in the universe, but foils it with the Infinite Love of God, who sent forth His Son to be a propitiation for sin and the reconciler of all things, and to bring in the redemption of the purchased possession. It points forward to that glorious time, when this Love, incarnate in the Holy Son, shall again be manifested in an hour when all nature shall be transfigured, and men and women shall receive their rewards, every man according to his work, when the Holy Judge shall separate between the wilfully wicked and those "who have come up through great tribulation and have washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb."

The moral order of the world demands an unveiling, a manifestation of the pure principle of Justice, a summing up of all things in the Presence of Jesus Christ, who is the mystery of Infinite Love and Infinite Justice.

IV

THE ANSWER OF THE SOCIAL ORDER

"Christian belief and the welfare of society are one."—*F. W. Bussell.*

"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever."—*Rev. xi.* 15.

THE social order well-nigh defies definitions. It strikes its roots deep into the physical order on the one hand, and on the other it is kept alive by innumerable invisible antennæ stretching into the spiritual universe. To logically define it one would have to know the ultimate facts of biology, psychology, and Providence. Such knowledge is possible only to one at the centre of things. Therefore our human definitions are at best but imperfect descriptions.

Yet the history of the human race affords a mass of data from which some inferences can be made as to the meaning and purpose of the social order. If this meaning can be arrived at, then, while the future of the race on this earth cannot be predicted with any degree of accuracy, some glimpse may be had of those fundamental factors which determine the history of mankind.

As indicated in the previous chapter the ultimate problem of humanity is a moral problem. Froude announced this on taking the chair of history at Ox-

ford. He said, "All history teaches me but one thing—'Thou shalt' and 'Thou shalt not.'" And the late Prof. Goldwin Smith in his brilliant lecture on "The Study of History" says, "Where the essence of morality lies, history must wait to be taught by ethical science. Till she is taught, it is impossible that she can form her philosophy on a sound basis; and therefore, those who are devoted to historical studies may be excused for impatiently desiring a more rational inquiry into this, the central secret of the world."

Since Plato and Aristotle there is no question which has been the subject of such profound and searching investigation as this matter of human morality, its origin, laws, and manifestations. The recent exhaustive studies of Westermarck, Sutherland, and Hobhouse, still leave us in the dark, because the science of ethics, if we can use such a term, is normative as opposed to natural science. "A natural science, in the simplest meaning of the term, deals with the laws in accordance with which phenomena actually occur. But man's life is not completely explained by these laws. He is capable of proposing to himself ends in life, and of directing his conduct with a view to the attainment of these." [1]

It is this endowment of freedom in choice that so completely upsets all calculations concerning man's future, and at the same time makes it so difficult to read correctly the palimpsest of the past. "Man is the most incalculable being in existence." [2] No individual, even the most careful observer, can track

[1] Seth, "Ethical Principles."

[2] Paulsen, "Introd. to Philosophy," Eng. tr., p. 373.

successfully his own past experience and map clearly the forces which have made and unmade him. He knows a few distinct landmarks, but the general topography of his moral life is made up of the influence of forces of heredity and environment inextricably interwoven with the exercise of his own power of self-control. How incompetent then must he be to presume to pass on the lives of the vast masses of men and that general resultant which we call history!

Yet, just as in the life of the individual some undeniable determining factors emerge, so in the history of the race or a section of it some laws of society become evident. The first law of the social order is environment. This is seen in the profound influences of topography and climate. It has led some anthropologists to assume that geographic environment, in the large sense of food supply, salubrity and intercommunication, explains the character and history of a people. "The soil is the Nation," said von Ihering. But while the power of geographic environment is admittedly great it is not all. For as Brinton has pointed out, "the Eskimos, living amid eternal snow with a limited diet and a desperately hard struggle for existence, have a singularly cheerful disposition, loving to talk, laugh, and indulge in pleasant intercourse. On the other hand, the Cakchiquels of Guatemala, living amid the most beautiful and fertile tracts in the world, are chronically morose and gloomy. Their temperament is reflected in their language, which, as the late Dr. Berendt remarked, is as singularly rich in terms for sad emotions as it is poor for those of a joyous character." [1]

[1] "The Basis of Social Relations," p. 145.

Such facts show that we must go deeper than geography for the solution of man's history. For when man has perfectly assimilated himself to a kindly natural environment he has not been a history maker, but usually a low type of savage. Life is not, as Spencer defined it, "adaptation to environment," but power over environment. And it is as illogical to assume that because a boat must necessarily follow all the meanderings of a river that its course is solely the product of the stream as it is to say that a people in adjusting themselves to a given environment are wholly its product. A canoe without a steersman will drift like a low order of man with the shifting currents, but one guided by intelligence and will will not only conquer the currents but may go up-stream.

And the history of mankind, taken in its broadest movement, has been specifically marked by this tendency to overcome the drift of environment. It is peculiar to man: the brute knows it not. In a true sense it is the secret of man. "Man at his best aims at the nobler task of moulding the environment to his own will and wishes. He is not its slave, but its master. Does arctic cold threaten to freeze the blood in his veins? He builds a hut and lights a lamp; and the summer zephyr is not milder than the air he breathes." [1] It is not fundamentally a matter of physical comfort that causes him to wrestle with his environment. He could be physically comfortable in most climates with much less exertion. Kant very profoundly remarked, "that if Deity had intended man to be merely happy, He would have endowed

[1] Brinton, "The Basis of Social Relations," p. 55.

him with instinct rather than reason." But there is something in man that causes him to unceasingly strive with his physical environment. "The one process of human evolution is the passage from a merely mechanical to a rational life."

The reason, or creative imagination, is the fundamental secret of man's progress. The moment the savage begins to overcome his environment he then begins to dream of a larger and better environment. This was the determining factor in those ceaseless migrations which mark the dawn of history. "The history of civilization is an Odyssey of wandering. . . . No race accepts its environment as permanent and final; there is always somewhere beyond the horizon of its present condition an undiscovered Atlantis, an untrodden isle of the Blessed, where life will beat with stronger pulse, and smite into the obstacles that surround it the impress of a higher destiny." [1] And but recently America's most accomplished thinker declared, "But I—I am essentially the wanderer, whose home is in eternity." [2]

So that the ultimate philosophy of history is not to be found in an analysis of soil, but in an analysis of man's nature? We have seen that in him pure reason postulates Unity, Purpose and Possibility of Perfection. We have seen that he is a moral being, awed by the dawning concept of Universal Being, and yet impelled to seek relations with Universal Being. These, not his food supply, are the springs of his history. Yet the physical environment must not be discounted. Much as man may have to wrestle with it, it furnishes his body food and shelter and oppor-

[1] Mabie, "My Study Fire." [2] Royce.

tunity for meditation. If it furnishes him with but a bare existence the struggle is so severe that the higher faculties have but little opportunity to exercise and develop. And this is true whether he be a primitive man or a pawn in the great mill of modern industry.

And this brings us face to face with our central problem—the answer of the social order to the teachings of the New Testament in reference to the Parousia of Christ. There can be no question but that the conception of the social order which is now fast growing on mankind is largely His creation. The solidarity of the race, the sacredness of personality, the gleam of universal brotherhood are the results of His teaching and influence. And His example and inspiration were projected into human history not a moment too soon. The peoples, who made Western Europe and at present dominate the world, were leavened with Christianity in the midst of their great migrations. When physical barriers put an end to those migrations they had ready at hand the principles of a new civilization, one based on the solidarity of mankind. From this last principle sprang the great Charters of the English race.

The problem before mankind to-day is the practical application of these conceptions which Christ gave to the world. A serious and gigantic problem from which there is no escape. Not to apply them is to become reconciled to conditions which will wither away the best hopes of the race. To earnestly and courageously attempt the task is to enter upon the most tremendous problem mankind has ever faced. Already many eminent sociologists are beginning to fear the effect of the centralizing tendencies beginning

to appear in human society. Professor Giddings in a recent article says, "It is a momentous change, and it is no wonder that thoughtful men are disturbed by it. But to the scientific sociologist there is no mystery in it. On one side of his statistical exhibit our appalling homicidal rate, on the other side of the exhibit the haste with which we are turning over all sorts of interest to governmental control, are scientific measures of the price we must pay for our idealistic attempt to mingle in one political aggregate, first, antagonistic races, and, secondly, the most miscellaneous assortment of nationalities, standards of living, religious, moral and political traditions, temperaments and opinions, ever nominally combined in one people."

We need here a word of warning. Many of the attempts to solve by legislation some of the deeper problems of society have no warrant in the philosophy of Christianity. And were Paul living on earth to-day he would warn against many of the ruthless attempts to remove the pillars which mark the steps of justice by which society has come to its present stage, just as he warned the early Christians to respect the tribunals of his time, for he saw in them, defective as they were, the only barriers to social chaos. And organized society must to-day repress with a strong hand all who would remove by violence the sure landmarks of the past.

Yet on the other hand it must ever hold before itself the dream of a better social order. This dream has been painted by an eminent English preacher: "To rebuild the city is the call of conscience to care for the life of children, in whom God renews the face

of the earth; to recognize the tremendous responsibilities that belong to those to whom the Almighty Father has entrusted the serious duty of procreating the race; to allow no claims of ownership to interfere with the task of providing wholesome houses in which during their earthly sojourn God's folk may find a fitting shelter; to be prevented by no consideration of the private gain of individuals from diminishing the inducements to alcoholic excess; to take order, even if it involve financial burdens, for the health of body and mind, the instruction, the enlightenment of all the people; to cocker no class in the community, but to conserve, develop, and make the most of each man, each woman, each child; to unbind always and everywhere the burdens which ignorance, thoughtlessness, and sin have imposed upon the brother for whom Christ died; to renew according to knowledge that whole society which it is the will of our loving Saviour to incorporate into Himself."[1]

It is not so difficult to write social programs, but when men go to put them into execution, they face that startling phenomenon—human nature. Of course the school which looks upon human nature as purely a product of environment has no difficulty. Change the environment and the nature changes. But, as we saw above, primitive man cannot be explained on such an hypothesis, much less modern man. "The fears and pains of the wandering nomad, in the presence of the irresistible destiny and of incalculable natural forces, are as nothing to those which beset the daily life of the complex and subtly woven being

[1] Simpson, "The Spirit and the Bride," p. 272.

into which man has in the course of ages been woven. Helpless and dependent as the nomad was, still more helpless and dependent is man as he now exists, burdened with the melancholy past as well as with the anxious present and the dark and perilous future."[1]

The defect in much social philosophy is a failure to take a full account of human nature. "Man does not live by bread alone." There are deeps in him which no human plummet has sounded or can ever sound. But it is not only a failure to take a full account, but just now there is a tendency to ignore some of the most obvious traits or tendencies in man. The awful fact of moral failure is treated as an incident or merely a defect due to improper environment. And there are those who argue that sin would disappear if humanity could be placed in a proper environment. This is the logic of all purely evolutionary ethics, and just now has a large place in the platform of some social theorists.

But history is against such a proposition. Mr. Lecky speaking of the causes of the prosperity of nations said, "Its foundation is laid in pure domestic life, in commercial integrity, in a high standard of moral worth and of public spirit, in simple habits, in courage, uprightness, and a certain soundness and moderation of judgment which springs quite as much from character as from intellect. If you would form a wise judgment of the future of a nation, observe carefully whether these qualities are increasing or decaying. Observe especially what qualities count for most in public life. Is character becoming of greater or less importance? Are the men who obtain

[1] Laurie, "Synthetica," Vol. II, p. 20.

the highest posts in the nation men of whom in private life and irrespective of party competent judges speak with respect? Are they of sincere convictions, consistent lives, indisputable integrity? . . . It is by observing this moral current that you can best cast the horoscope of a nation."[1]

And one of the saddest lessons in history is the fact that not infrequently the best and most glorious days of a nation have been those when her citizens had to live laborious and frugal lives, when the struggle with environment was intense and ennobling. It is not true that wealth, health, leisure, of themselves produce men of the highest character. Visit almost any American city to-day. Wander down some beautiful avenue leading to one of its spacious parks. Note the elegant and costly homes, the well-kept lawns, the luxurious automobiles, the lovely children in charge of maids or nurses. It seems a dream of a perfect city from which all ill has been banished. Yet in the heart of that city countless families live in one room amid unhealthful conditions that sap strength and destroy life. Houses of shame leer here and there, and the strange woman invades even elegant apartments with her net of death. In almost every block the open saloon or a grocery or a drug-store with liquor license deals out poison to all who will buy. Yonder the great brewery or distillery changes the blessed fruitage of Mother Earth into alcohol. And more than one elegant home you have just passed is built upon the blood money of those who have perished in their weakness. And yet many of these gentlemen who thrive on the weakness of

[1] "The Political Value of History."

their fellows are personally refined and intelligent gentlemen with every advantage of physical heredity and culture!

How shall the new social conscience deal with such men? Forbid under heavy penalties their business? Yes, do so, but the men will not be changed thereby. Their obtuseness of moral relations will manifest itself in some other way. And strictly speaking they are no worse ethically than the man who runs a sweat-shop, who adulterates his groceries, or who sells his legal talents to some corporation for the purpose of evading the law or corrupting councilmen and legislators, even though their power for palpable harm is infinitely greater. It is the same violation of the social bond, the same worshipping of Satan.

The whole problem reduces itself to a question of individual character. "A man is not a mere atom that can be fitted into a place. He is a person with a free activity, with a will, and with a force that may be anarchic; one in whom there is a conflict between inclinations, between a law in his members and another and higher law of his mind. He needs to be set right, and no mere economic can do this. Irruptions of passion; the corrosive power of selfishness; the promptings of ambition, of greed, of a desire for mastery rather than ministry; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life; tendencies to indolence, and indulgence, to weakness, willfulness, waywardness of temper,—these cannot be disregarded. They will interfere with the acceptance of the most rational of ends; they will break through the most perfect of disciplines. How is the inward

adjustment to be realized? Socialism has no place for the word sin: alas! human nature has."[1]

Unless men can be adjusted at the core of their being the most beautiful and prosperous civilization is doomed to sudden ruin. Not a few sociologists are becoming aware of this. Tarde, the most eminent among the French, says, "The strongest and most durable powers of earth are not those that come from an electoral urn (a polling booth) but from an election imaginary and mystical."[2] And one of the most thoughtful among Americans has but recently written, "Out of all the conflict of abhorrent forces it becomes clearer every day that the new earth can only come to a race that has conquered animalism and has risen to the ranks of a brotherhood founded upon love. Mere social, political or economic conventions are like treaties between nations, made to be broken as soon as some other arrangement seems more profitable. The Kingdom of God cannot be had upon any such terms. Jesus came proclaiming a new Kingdom of God about to be born, but His warning hand held men back and bade them pause upon its threshold; for entrance to this holy place was only for those baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire. . . . The race is coming into its new society because more and more it is learning the lesson of Jesus. Never in all the centuries have so many men and women as now been ready to give their lives for the lives of others. An ever-increasing and glorious company in all ranks and professions are saying to the hungry world, Eat of my body

[1] Lang, "The Church and Its Social Mission," p. 273.
[2] "Les Transformations du Pouvoir," p. 45.

and drink of my blood for I give you my life. With the widening of this everlasting sacrament, the inner kingdom of God will be answered by the glory of the outward kingdom of God, covering the world with plenty, with beauty, and with peace." [1]

This last sentence raises the central problem with which we are concerned. Can the race attain to perfection amid the limitations of the present physical order? We have seen that environment does not produce character, nay rather, a favourable outward environment is frequently conducive to decay of moral fibre. How will it fare with the soul of man amid the ease and comfort which he is bringing to pass? Will he maintain his grip on the Unseen, by which he has arrived at his present condition? Will he detach himself from the Christ who gave him this larger dream and the power to approach it? The problem has been clearly stated by McDougall: "At the present time it may seem that in one small quarter of the world, namely, Western Europe, society has achieved an organization so intrinsically stable that it may with impunity tolerate the flourishing spirit of inquiry and give free rein to the impulse of curiosity. But to assume that this is the case would be rash. The issue remains doubtful. The spirit of inquiry has broken all its bonds and soared gloriously, until now the conception of natural causation predominates in every field; and, if the notion of supernatural powers still persists in the minds of men, it is in the form of the conception of a Divine Creator who maintains the laws that He has made, but does not constantly interfere with their

[1] Smith, "Democracy and the Church," pp. 336, 338.

operation. This change of belief, this withdrawal of supernatural power from immediate intervention in the life of mankind, inevitably and greatly diminishes the social efficiency of the supernatural sanctions. Whether our societies will prove capable of long surviving this process is the most momentous of the problems confronting Western civilization." [1] When one surveys the diverse and antagonistic forces at work in the modern world he can but recall the words of the sanest of American thinkers, uttered shortly before his recent death, "Humanity is driving stormily on its perilous way, and no man knows from history or observation what the end will be." [2]

Even if it were possible to perfect human nature here and to abolish all disease but death from old age, man would still be confronted with the problem of animal existence, the innumerable forms of sentient life beneath him and by whose blood and suffering he has mounted to preëminence. One who ranks next to Darwin as a close student of insect life says, "Shall we never behold the realization of that sublime dream, which is sung on Sundays in the smallest village church, '*Gloria in excelsis Deo et terræ pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.*' If war affected humanity alone, perhaps the future would have peace in store for us, seeing that generous minds are working for it with might and main ; but the scourge also rages in the brute, which in its obstinate way will never listen to reason. Once the evil is laid down as a general condition it perhaps becomes incurable. Life in the

[1] "Social Psychology," p. 319.

[2] Bowne, "Essence of Religion," p. 19.

future, there is every cause to fear, will be what it is to-day, a perpetual massacre." [1]

The future social order on earth will type the general moral intelligence of the mass, irradiated, of course, by the dream of perfection which has ever hovered over the race. Those whose task is that of developing moral culture know how difficult is the problem of persuading men to live according to the highest. The struggle, even in the best of men, is never ending. Only an approximate moral perfection is possible to man here. "The soul partakes both of the spirit and of the body. As allied to both and uniting them it is the sphere of those processes of understanding and feeling of which animals below us exhibit the traces and which, so to speak, the spirit conducts through the medium of the bodily organization. Linked with the infirm brain and heart and members, the soul can attain to only a negative perfection. Its glorification has yet to come; but by the Divine grace its almost innumerable faculties of perception and feeling and action may be and must be brought under the supreme ascendency of the sanctifying Spirit." [2]

And the hope of the world's social regeneration comes in the last source from the men and women, who, confident of final victory within, hope and pray and toil for the victory without. They are not daunted by the fact that periods of moral reformation are not infrequently closely followed by times of immoral excess, by the fact that just now the whole social fabric, even the home itself, the primal cell of

[1] Fabre, "The Life and Love of the Insect."

[2] Pope, "Prayers of St. Paul," p. 129.

civilization, is endangered by theorists who lose sight of the obvious truth that the present world is not intended for the production of a perfect social order but for the development of character. And they know enough of the past to surmise that if man should ever succeed in producing a perfect outward society on earth the forces of the Universe would in all probability wreck it in order to throw mankind back upon the only permanent base of personality and society—God Himself. A thoughtful and scientific mind, who witnessed the sinking of the steamship *Titanic*, says, "To those men standing on the top deck with all boats lowered, and still more when the boats had all left, there came the realization that human resources were exhausted and human avenues of escape closed. With it came the appeal to whatever consciousness each had of a Power that had created the universe. . . . When the boats had left and it was seen the ship was going down rapidly, men stood in groups on the deck engaged in prayer, and later, as some of them lay on the overturned collapsible boat, they repeated together over and over again the Lord's Prayer—irrespective of religious beliefs, some, perhaps, without religious beliefs, united in a common appeal for deliverance from their surroundings. . . . It must have been because each one saw removed the thousand and one ways in which he had relied on human, material things to help him—including even dependence on the overturned boat with its bubble of air inside, which any moment a rising swell might remove as it tilted too far sideways, and sink the boat beneath the surface—saw laid bare his utter dependence on something that had made him and given him power to

think—whether he named it God or Divine Power or First Cause or Creator, or named it not at all but recognized it unconsciously—saw them in the form of words he was best acquainted with in common with his fellow men." [1]

To one who considers how frail this earth is, menaced by a thousand possible physical disasters, the sinking of this great steamer, so costly and perfect in its arrangement and equipment, so well officered, so buoyant with hope, is a parable that might well be pondered. Without the larger interpretation of Christianity it can bring only dismay to the human heart. This is evidenced by the conclusions of an able English thinker that the future holds out no hope for either man or the social order. "Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving. His life is brief and powerless . . . on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark." [2] But interpreted by the light of Christianity, which illumines and explains the ultimate facts in man's personality, human history is seen to be a striving of man not only for perfection for himself but also for his kind. And he has succeeded best in himself when he has sacrificed himself for his kind. Dante, exiled, weary, lonely, conquered the baseness, the bigotry, the cruelty of his age, by rearing in mental vision the most splendid intellectual creation human genius has yet achieved—a perfect Paradise above the purifying fires of Purgatory, and the unquenchable flames of Hell. "He met life as a strong

[1] Beesley, "The Sinking of the Steamship *Titanic*."

[2] B. Russell, "Philosophical Essays," pp. 60, 70.

swimmer meets the sea, not with dismay and outcries, but with heroic putting forth of effort, with calmness and steadiness of soul, with the buoyancy of a great strength matching itself against a great peril."[1]

Man, by virtue of his nature, by virtue of his achievements, by the strength which Christ has imparted to civilization, will never surrender his hope of a perfect society. He already sees some measure of fulfillment of the hopes of the past. And although he realizes that the present physical order is not designed to support a perfect social order he will none the less labour unceasingly for the perfect realization of that brotherhood whose implications are on every hand. As the soul is of more importance than the physical body so he will strive for the unfolding of the social soul, believing that God in His good time will give it a body as it pleaseth Him. "Even now amongst us the spiritual walls are rising of the heavenly City of God. At length when the scaffolding of the Material Order is removed, they shall be seen in their full strength and beauty."[2]

It is not only conceivable but it is demanded by the whole logic of human life and its history that Jesus Christ, who breathed upon the social order its first real regenerating breath, whose teachings have been the dynamic of all present achievement and promise, should return to complete, by the transfiguration of the physical order and the perfect illumination of the moral and spiritual order, the long social evolution that sinks its feet deep in the

[1] Mabie, "Essays in Literary Interpretation," p. 205.
[2] Stanton, "Jewish and Christian Messiah," p. 235.

miry clay of time and sense, yet with an ever deepening glory in its face stretches out its hands towards the Infinite and the Eternal. "For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able to subject all things unto Himself."[1]

[1] Phil. iii. 20-21.

V

THE ANSWER OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL ORDER

"In the Church God crowns the edifice of human society. There is nothing in social development above or beyond it."—*Prof. Robert Ellis Thompson.*

"Which is His Body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."—*St. Paul.*

THE late Professor Bruce, in his book "The Kingdom of God," says sadly, "No one can be hopeful for the Church in its present condition." That deep and devout mind was not ignorant of the glorious aspects of Christian history. But he saw clearly and felt keenly the imperfections of the visible Church in the nineteenth century.

He saw what every careful observer must see that these imperfections are not wholly due to the limitations of a finite world, but to persistent and willful human error. There are errors of doctrine, there are errors of polity, there are errors of administration, which seemingly defy correction. A purely spiritual institution, it has the bloodiest record in all history. It is true that the stake and the faggot have long since been laid aside, but the old ashes from which leaped the fires of Smithfield and St. Bartholomew still smoulder beneath many altars. They need but a breath of fanaticism to kindle them to flame. The

Church has ever been the peculiar prey of the ambitious ecclesiastic and the designing politician. The one uses its pulpit and machinery to exploit himself: the other appeals to its ethical sense and its ignorance of civic conditions to help him carry out his political schemes. And not infrequently it is swept into the advocacy of impossible measures by well-meaning but unorientated reformers.

And yet the Church of Jesus Christ is the mightiest, the purest, the tenderest, the holiest institution this earth has known. Its history is an illuminated missal bright with the blood of its martyrs and gleaming with the hopes of humanity. It originated and propagated the doctrine of the Brotherhood of Man. It has been the source of the life-giving streams which have fructified modern civilization. It lifted family life above the play of natural desire and sanctified it with the atmosphere of heaven. It has cradled childhood in purity and wrapped it in the swaddling clothes of deathless love. To-day it is aflame with millions of consecrated lives. Its missionary activities are the causes of the mighty commotions among the nations. Despite the men who have used its tremendous power for their own advantage and have trailed its holy garments in human blood, it casts upon the troubled waters of this world a glory and a peace as of a jasper stone. Even among all its imperfections the student of history perceives in its ever-enlarging outlines a simulacrum of His Body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.

Never was there a time when the real influence of the Church was greater than in the opening years of the twentieth century. It is true that the visible

organizations of which it is composed are passing, at least many of them, through a period of stress and reorganization, but the combined streams which go out from them constitute the life-blood of the human race. Where these waters do not flow there is the shadow of death. Where they touch there is either the noon of a splendid civilization or the promise of the dawn. Nowhere near the precincts of a true church of Jesus Christ is there the miasma of decay. As Bishop Westcott once said, "The history of nations is but an episode in the history of the Church. They perish, but she lives on. They furnish the materials, and she constructs with them fresh sanctuaries for the service of her Lord. . . . There may be times of storm and times of sunshine, but the Christian society still grows with a growth which man is equally unable to originate and to destroy. The Gospel continues to leaven, however slowly in our eyes, the whole mass of our life."

The Church, in two ways, completes or rather prepares for the coming of that perfect society which is dimly adumbrated in the social order. Through its Gospel of the Incarnation it unites man to God, through its hallowing services it strengthens this new union in Christ, through its call to heroic and self-denying labours it develops the soul of man into a blood-washed crystal reflecting the love of God—a prism dissolving the pure white light of heaven into a sevenfold radiance of noble virtues—a divine organism drawing its life from the boundless deeps of the Eternal Spirit. Man is thus placed in the only way of perfect approach to his fellow man—through the life and love of the Father. Only thus can the

limitations and oppositions of class and race be resolved. Only thus can the eternal foundations of a perfect society be laid in Christ Jesus.

In a very true sense the Church "is the city with foundations." Of no other social organism can this be said. "The lower sociology can get no further than the nation. Having exalted that to the rank of an unlimited authority, it sees nothing beyond it, unless it be a unification of all existing states into a world-state or a vague notion of a universal brotherhood of mankind. Christian sociology recognizes the existence of an institute of humanity, which, however far short of its ideal, aims at nothing less than the unification of all mankind in a society which shall transcend all limitations of race and nationality. This is the Church." [1] There are those who like the great German theologian Rothe think that in time the Church must coalesce with the State and thus form the Kingdom of God. But this is to lose sight of the profound fact that in a finite world the spheres of Church and State can never coincide. The one is a human arrangement for a passing world; the other is an inspired witness of an eternal order. The one, when most perfect, still lacks finality; the other, when most imperfect, is still a prophecy of "the restoration of all things." Hence Church and State must ever be kept separate for the safety of each, though the Church must be to the State what the soul is to the body—an informing spirit.

It is to be questioned whether the Church is fully conscious of her responsibility to the present world order. Divided by unfortunate and necessary divi-

[1] Thompson, "The Divine Order of Human Society," p. 195.

sions, she has been too much occupied with disputes as to polity and doctrine, with hurtful rivalry and baneful competition. She is just beginning to rouse herself and to hear the as yet inarticulate thunder of the millions who are clamouring for more justice and more kindliness than now exists. Though men and devils oppose her, she must at least do two things—give herself as never before to the regeneration of the individual through unceasing evangelization, and find some basis of agreement by which she can present a united front to the world.

One of the most prominent of American statesmen,[1] after a recent journey around the globe, declared that everywhere throughout the world there is an unmistakable call for democracy in government. Now there can be no doubt but that in time the people will take all civil rule unto themselves, either through selected legislators and executives, or through a final referendum to themselves. No one who knows either history or human nature can but sympathize with this desire, can but look askance at the last named alternative in the present stage of human culture, mental and ethical. Unless the Church can stabilize mankind as it passes into a larger democracy the future is dark with disaster. One who by virtue of his labours has a right to speak says, "Is there no way to marshall public opinion to the issue before, rather than after, bloodshed? Is not this a neglected function of the Church? . . . Her function is to shed light so we may distinguish the real from the fallacious. It is thus public opinion is made. When the Church exerts her influence upon public opinion

[1] Hon. W. J. Bryan.

intelligently, it is almost irresistible. She is now classed as a reactionary; not because she really is such, but because her want of cohesion and unanimity of purpose paralyzes her faculty of expression, and her silence is misinterpreted. If she could learn to speak with one mind and voice, and take her stand for the right in great public issues that are not complicated with partisanship, she would render great service to civilization."[1]

There are signs that the Church is arousing herself to her supreme task. Many of the dogmas which have acted as insuperable barriers to closer union are melting before unbiassed investigation into the Apostolic Age. The laymen who supply the funds are beginning to demand that no more precious money shall be wasted in sinful competition over the same field. And a larger spirit is being breathed everywhere throughout Protestant Christendom, and in some circles of the Roman Church. The centrifugal tide on whose gleaming waters flashed the golden dawn of the Renaissance and on whose bosom the great free churches of the modern world were born, is beginning to ebb. The Johannine age, the age of love, is at last here. That eagle spirit whose inspired genius dominates the last books of the New Testament is beginning to see the fruitage of the germinal seed he cast adrift upon the waters of the centuries. No man can tell what glorious blossoms therefrom shall pour their healing incense on the breezes of to-morrow. Not easily will institutions rooted in tradition and buttressed by dogma change their forms and coalesce into new organizations. Not rashly will Churches

[1] Cutting, "The Church and Society," pp. 170, 171.

which have a free and abundant life consent to exchange their safety and freedom for the perilous path of a huge ecclesiasticism. And yet, while there is grave danger from the power of large organizations, it is evident that the love which rises in the heart of the Eternal Father, and which mingled with the blood of Jesus, is laving afresh the hearts of men in every land, will not rest until the prayer of the dying Christ is answered, "That they all may be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me."

Men may differ as to their interpretation of this prayer, but one sure thing this present age is demanding—the practical union of the Church of Jesus Christ. He is blind who does not see it. There is already manifest a tendency towards the unification of human government. Democracy is its watchword and informing power. There is growing up a world literature with ecumenical characteristics. In the words of Loliee, "We are approaching unity, and everything foretells this state of things. Nations are, without their being able to prevent it, borne along in the same whirl of life; it is the great sign of the times."[1] When we realize that this current towards world-unity has its origin in the teachings of Christ, then we ought to look for its noblest and most complete expression in the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. Above the clash and tumult of this passing world, beyond its sin and ignorance, He sitteth at the right hand of God the Father, clothed in all majesty and

[1] "A History of Comparative Literature," p. 374.

power, yearning with all the longing of the Bridegroom for the purification and transfiguration of His Bride of Time, calling to her as never before to adorn herself in love and unity for the Consummation of all things in Him.

VI

THE ANSWER OF THE HEART

"All mysteries of pain and sorrow stir up afresh the awful three—Why? Whence? Whither?"—*Lafcadio Hearn.*

"No matter how far we must go with modern science and scholarship, the last word lies with the spirit of man, not with the play of spectral atoms or the heedless crash of 'casual' history."—*Prof. R. M. Wenley.*

"I shall be satisfied in the shining of Thy Presence."—*Ps. xvii.* 15.

THERE is in every human soul an abysmal depth of experience, which no psychological plummet has ever thoroughly sounded. As well expect to find on the rough canvas the peculiar radiance of the sunset colours which flash through the diaphanous clouds in the west. Occasionally in great literature, like the Bible, some of the Greek poets, Dante, Victor Hugo, Tennyson, there is a mighty echo from the deeps of the soul. Wordsworth tried to express it when he wrote:

> "Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
> Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,—
> To me the meanest flower that blows can give
> Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

It is well to remember this in these days of searching analysis and laboratory methods. The life of the

late Lafcadio Hearn is a remarkable illustration in point. Few men have been so endowed by heredity for the quest of the true and the beautiful. The son of an Irish father and a Greek mother, he was "a poet by the law of his being." Missing because of its sin and crassness the real meaning of Western civilization, he fled to Japan, hoping to find there among a people as simple as the early Greeks the realization in life of the ideal which illumined his soul. But he died a disappointed man. "The mystic dream lost its lustre, like a flower in the wind." Yet he said, "The eternal quest must go on." "The hair of Lilith —just one—has been twisted around his heart,—an ever tightening fine line of gold. . . . And he sees her smile just ere he passes into the Eternal darkness."

We are all dreamers. The underlying motive of the most practical business undertakings is a composite of the dreams of the promoter. We find the most sordid man of affairs toiling away night and day either for the pleasure of his loved or to acquire a competency in order that he may retire and realize his dreams. And yet these dreams are never realized. There is always a vast gap between performance and expectation. This is notably true in the case of the creative imagination. "The greatest tragedy of art is the inability of the artist to fully realize his ideal. Creative genius like pure gold wastes in the using."[1] And so the higher a man rises in the scale of mental culture, in spiritual beauty, the more intensely does his soul clash with the present world order. St. Paul declares that man

[1] Sir Wm. Armstrong.

protests against the present economy of frailty to which the whole creation hath been subjected (Rom. viii.).

Hence a religious interpretation of life becomes a necessity. It is either this or suicide. And suicide, almost always arising out of failure, in itself is a witness to the dream of the perfect. Unless the cruelty which is present in the world order can be justified at some future time by a more perfect economy, then the tortured soul is justified into escaping into the dark night of Annihilation. An unending continuation of the present order, notwithstanding all its beauty, joy, tenderness and love, would at length be equal to nothing less than an experiment in ceaseless vivisection by the powers behind the world. But the moral sense, reinforced by the æsthetic, has ever thrown a religious robe over the universe and awaited in courageous faith the coming of "the new heavens and a new earth." Man is an eschatologist by virtue of his constitution, and the defects of the present order but accentuate his longing for the redemption of all things. The entrance of Christianity into the world justified the ultimate faiths of the heart by revealing to man the Deity which his moral nature had demanded and by proclaiming a Consummation such as ethics and æsthetics unite to expect.

How deeply these truths are ingrained in the soul of man may be seen by a few extracts from the master souls of the race. Plato, in the Phædrus, speaks of "the fourth and last kind of madness which is imputed to him who, when he sees the beauty of the earth, is transported with the recollections of the

true beauty; he would like to fly away, but he cannot; he is like a bird fluttering and looking upward and careless of the world below; and is therefore esteemed mad. And I have shown this of all inspirations to be the noblest and highest and the offspring of the highest."

Dante, banished from his beloved Florence, his lone pathway shadowed by personal grief and the darkness of the time, out of the depths of his spirit created a vast world of Hell, Purgatory and Heaven. Sin is the central theme of the Divine Comedy. Its malign manifestation makes Hell. Its purification creates Purgatory, not a place but a state of moral discipline. Its extinction opens the gates of Paradise and discloses the beatific Vision. Hence it is well named "the first great Christian poem." It symbolizes the supreme truths of the Christian religion. The human soul in its highest reach after the ideal is necessarily Christian. The physical order of the world being at present imperfect, the moral order in clash with it, the æsthetic sense through music and poetry ever passing beyond it—all three unite to proclaim the truth of Christianity, for in Christianity alone do these phases of the world order receive their full value and appropriate setting.

> "All indistinctly apprehend a bliss
> On which the soul may rest, the hearts of all
> Yearn after it, and to that wished bourn
> All therefore strive."

Even in Shakespeare, who, a dramatist by nature and profession, confines his mighty genius largely to

things of time and sense, we find the same truth breaking in ;

> "The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind."

If it be replied that this passage is merely a speech of Prospero, and not intended as an expression of Shakespeare's philosophy of life, we turn to that masterpiece of the poet, the storm in "King Lear." Lear says,

> "Let the great gods,
> That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
> Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
> Thou hast within thee undivulged crimes,
> Unwhipp'd of justice : hide thee, thou bloody hand ;
> Thou perjured, and thou similar man of virtue
> That art incestuous; caitiff, to pieces shake,
> That under covert and convenient seeming
> Hast practiced on man's life. Close pent-up guilts,
> Rive your concealing continents and cry
> These dreadful summoners grace."

The poet shows that he has perceived the profound relation between the dissolution of nature and the pangs of conscience. It is not, as some would have us believe, a reminiscence of those primitive days when men deified the powers of nature and were terrified by them, but the deeper perception of the human spirit that in the breaking up of the physical order it must come face to face with Eternal Spirit, who is the source of both matter and spirit. This sense of

impending judgment is upheld by a sound analysis of human nature in relation to physical nature. Coleridge, commenting upon this scene in Lear, says, "O, what a world's convention of agonies is here! All external nature in storm, all moral nature convulsed,—the real madness of Lear, the feigned madness of Edgar, the babbling of the Fool, the desperate fidelity of Kent—surely such a scene was never conceived before or since! Take it but as a picture for the eye only, it is more terrific than any which Michel Angelo, inspired by a Dante, could have conceived, and which none but a Michel Angelo could have executed. Or let it have been uttered to the blind, the howlings of nature would seem converted into the voice of *conscious humanity.*"

The italics are ours, for we wish to call attention to this pregnant thought of Coleridge. The storms in the physical world are but dim simulacra of the commotions of the human spirit. If ever there lived a man who knew in the depths of his spirit what this meant, that man was Coleridge, the most pathetic and powerful personality in Modern English literature. It was Lamb who said of him that he was heart-hungry for eternity. And Pater well says, "Coleridge, by what he did, what he was, and what he failed to do, represents that inexhaustible discontent, languor, and homesickness, that endless regret, the chords of which ring all through our modern literature."

But lest it be thought that this "homesickness" is confined to men of creative genius we quote the famous lines of Carlyle, "Man's unhappiness comes of his Greatness; it is because there is an Infinite in him,

which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the Finite. Will the whole Finance Ministers and Upholsterers and Confectioners of modern Europe undertake, in joint-stock company, to make one Shoeblack *happy?* They cannot accomplish it, above an hour or two; for the Shoeblack has a soul quite other than his Stomach; and would require, if you consider it, for his permanent satisfaction and saturation, simply this allotment, no more, and no less: God's infinite Universe altogether to himself, therein to enjoy infinitely, and fill every wish as fast as it rose."

Yea, verily, the human heart cannot be satisfied with anything which time and sense have to offer. Perhaps no one has stated this more powerfully than that student of nature, the late Richard Jefferies. In his greatest book, "The Story of My Heart," he tells how a weary restlessness came upon him. "It was like a drought, a moral drought—as if I had been absent for many years from the sources of life and hope. The inner nature was faint; all was dry and tasteless; I was weary for the pure fresh springs of thought. Some instinctive feeling, uncontrollable, drove me to the sea. . . . I stood where the foam came to my feet, and looked out over the sunlit waters. The great earth bearing the richness of its harvest, and its hills golden with corn, was at my back, its strength and firmness under me. The great sun shone above, the wide sea was before me, the wind came sweet and strong from the waves. The life of the earth and the sea, the glow of the sun filled me. I touched the surge with my hand, I lifted my face to the sun, I opened my lips to the wind. I

prayed aloud in the roar of the waves; my soul was as strong as the sea, and prayed with the sea's might: Give me fullness of life, like to the sea and the sun, to the earth and the air, give me fullness of physical life, mind equal and beyond their fullness; give me a greatness and perfection of soul higher than all things; give me my inexpressible desire, which swells in me like a tide,—give it to me with all the force of the sea." And again, "The soul throbs like the sea for larger life. No thought which I have ever had has satisfied my soul."

Lest this longing of a man like Jefferies be diagnosed as a disease of the imagination, we place beside it a statement from one of the ablest and most critical thinkers of our time, the late Professor Laurie. "Man," he says, "is capable of an infinite longing for he knows not what, to which the only response is shadows of shadows. He has forced on him a perception of the evanescence of things and a haunting suspicion of the futility of what he yet *must*, in his most vital moments, pronounce to be the highest and best. He has an intelligence greater than that of animals that he may puzzle himself with the hopeless contradictions of experience; and this intelligence enables him to fight and tear and slay his fellow man as the beasts cannot do, for now, by the gift of reason, cruelty to each can be organized with a devilish ingenuity. When we think of all this, are we not entitled to expect some explanation of the strange cosmic event which we call Man?"[1]

To the heart of man Christianity furnishes the sole adequate explanation, or rather the sole sufficient

[1] "Synthetica."

support, because "he seeks for some response in the Universal to his own unsatisfied longings and boundless capacity for emotional as well as intellectual love." [1] The God, whom Christ reveals, not only satisfies every demand of Will-dialectic, every implication of the pure reason, but as a God of Infinite Love He is "an Infinite Heart on which to repose." It is this Truth, rather this Experience, which, brought to this world by Christ, has arrested the inevitable drift of all higher civilizations towards Pessimism, and breathed into the heart of man the dynamic power of a great Hope. Bacon's comparison of man's relation to God as akin to that of a dog sustained by man is a homely yet profound one—"mark what a Generosity, and Courage he will put on, when he findes himselfe maintained by a Man; who to him is in stead of a *God*, or *Melior Natura:* which courage is manifestly such, as that Creature, without that Confidence of a better nature, then his owne, could never attaine. So Man, when he resteth and assureth himself, upon divine Protection, and Favour, gathereth a Force and Faith; which Humane Nature, in itselfe, could not obtaine." [2]

When we shall have a logic of energy, as we now have a science of energy, then we shall enter upon the serious task of considering the sweep and effect of the Revelation of Christ as a current of power completely transforming men and nations. The transformation which it effects in men and races is nothing short of supernatural. A few years ago the village of Luebo, in the heart of Africa, was regarded by the natives as a place of unspeakable cruelty and horror

[1] "Synthetica," p. 120. [2] "Essay on Atheism."

on account of its bestiality and slave-trade. To-day it is a Christian settlement with churches and schools, peace, brotherhood, hope. Such transformations are inexplicable by the data of either science or philosophy. They point to a current of life rising out of the very heart of the Central Life itself and possessing the wondrous power of relating the worst manifestations of human life to itself and to all human life.

So that we are warranted by all the facts of life and by the implications in every department of the world order in affirming that this Manifested Energy will not rest until the whole universe physical and spiritual is completely in unison with the Central and Eternal Life. One of the profoundest of living thinkers has recently designated his way of looking at the world as a theory of Activism. He bases it on the evidential nature of spiritual values and constructs a spiritual philosophy of activity thereon. He says, "Man defends himself through energies which have in no way originated out of his egotistic desires of life, but rather he feels himself convinced of a greater depth and, along with this, of a priceless value; but he cannot call into life such depth and value from his own energy, and, therefore, he depends on redemption and love for the realization of his own nature. Thus, there grows a burning desire after Infinite Love on the other side of all questions of merit, and after a new order of things beyond all calculation and measurement." [1]

But this system, inspiring and true so far as it goes, is defective in its appreciation of Christ as the

[1] Eucken, "The Truth of Religion," p. 397.

living link between the Universal Life and the frail but desire-filled life of man. It lacks theological depth and a just appreciation of the significance of the present world order. It points surely to the Goal but fails to apprehend the meaning of the Guide and the necessary physical transformation before that Goal can be reached. This is due to its monistic leanings. Now Christianity buttresses itself squarely upon two worlds—the world of sense, and the world of spirit. By no possible metaphysics can man bridge this gap. Jesus Christ alone, by His life, Resurrection, and Prophecy of a Parousia, completes the synthesis which philosophy seeks in vain. "He shall head up all things in Christ."

And it is the Christian doctrine of a Consummation which satisfies not only the head but the heart. We have seen that the physical order with its gleams of perfection hints and sighs for the manifestation of the sons of God. And man, wondrous man, set within this blood-stained arena, where countless creatures have perished in their pain, where he, too, oppressed by time's finite hand, and entranced by symbols of perfection, stands ready to do battle to the last because Jesus Christ has set within his heart the hope and sure promise of a victory, wherein even the last enemy, Death, shall be swallowed up and disappear.

It was this that caused Arnold Tonybee, one of England's noblest social workers, to cry out, "We want an eternal end; and this cannot be found in the good of the human race." Man wants a Consummation so full and complete that God Himself shall be vindicated before all intelligences in the universe.

And it needs no large amount of logical intelligence to conclude that such a Consummation must include all imperfections and limitations resolved at last. Just what form such a Consummation will take man can well leave to Infinite Wisdom, but its Centre and Glory must necessarily be the Christ, who "is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."

Just as the first Advent was seemingly delayed and yet came unexpectedly, and assumed a form so different from Messianic hope that the Jews were unable to grasp it, so the second Advent may be long delayed, will come unexpectedly, and in a form different from any conception of the human imagination, even as aided by Gospel symbolism. Of but one fact we can be sure—the Return or Manifestation of Christ. "This same Jesus shall so come again."

No other hope can hearten the heart of man in his unending struggle here. And just now it would seem to be humanity's greatest need, for in spite of man's mighty material achievements, his heart hunger seems to be deepening, especially if we are to judge by the plays which occupy first place on the modern stage, such as Rostand's "Chantecler," Widmann's "Maikafer-Komedie," and Maeterlinck's "Bluebird." They all voice, even from the lips of the lower creatures, this desire for a more perfect and more enduring world. There must be some final and comprehensive answer else "Human life, heaving with emotion, borne aloft by ideals, vivid with hope, and all this wondrous world with its various beauty, its infinite subtleness of grace and tenderness, is a mask of—Nothing!"

Surely, as Bishop Wescott phrased it, "our dis-

content is a witness to our destiny." And our discontent is but enhanced by the fact that the Perfect is set in the midst of the Imperfect. This earth, held strongly in its place, revolving at terrific speed, does not disturb the least brain centre by its rapid flight through space. The soul, looking out through the eye, beholds a stable world, and for the most part a pleasing world with its glorious dawns and sublime sunsets, its vast landscapes, noble trees, flower-covered meadows or fields golden with grain, its populous cities with their increasing comforts, its sweet and lovely homes, where dream-faced children learn their holy lessons at mother's knee.

And when at eventide the weary but happy father comes home to gather his dear ones about the hearth-stone, not even the angels in heaven gaze on a tenderer, more entrancing picture. Would that it could last always! Alas, a few brief years, and it is gone! And to the one who is left nothing that this earth can offer can ease the heart-hunger that cries day and night for reunion and return. "Them also shall He bring with Him." It is this promise of the Perfect, set in the midst of the sorrowful imperfect, that soothes the breaking heart and causes it to look beyond the present order to the House of Many Mansions, to the City with the stable and enduring foundations, whose designer and builder is God.

In the last analysis this dream of the Perfect is the hope of seeing God. Man, even in the lowest stages of his existence, gropes after the Ground of his existence. His history on earth has been a history of God-seeking, never satisfied until God was fully revealed in Christ. In this revelation of God as Father

man finds all his inquiries satisfied, his soul thirst quenched by the draught of eternal life which Jesus imparts to every earnest, self-denying soul who follows Him. So man, reaching content in the centre of his being, awaits the promised perfection of the outer order. "Only an Eternal Life, already begun and truly known in part here, though fully achieved and completely to be understood hereafter, corresponds to the deepest longings of man's spirit, as touched by the pre-venient Spirit of God."[1]

And so not only does the world order in all its manifestations, with their implications, point to a completed universe, to a redeemed humanity with Christ at its head, but the Spirit of God, welling fully into the human spirit through the channels made by the Incarnation, reinforces the cry of the soul, "Come quickly, Lord Jesus." This is a cry, not merely for the manifestation of the Personal Christ, though that is its substance and strength, but it is a cry for the completion of the long task through which the universe has been struggling since creation's morning. "And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come." The Church, as the representative of the Redeemer, in all her toil and effort to make this a better and more habitable world, is crying for that Consummation and the Return of the Bridegroom, so that faith shall change to sight and prayer to praise.

Our task is ended. No one realizes more keenly than the author how imperfectly it has been executed. Yet we trust that we have been able to show that the doctrine of the Second Advent is not an Apostolic

[1] Von Hugel, "Eternal Life: A Study of Its Implications and Applications."

addendum to the teachings of Christ, but that it lies at the very core of the Christian Revelation. Instead of being a doctrine opposed by science and philosophy, it is upheld by the deeper implications of the world order, physical, mental, moral, and social. Only in such a full manifestation of God, as the Parousia of Jesus Christ will bring to pass, can the human heart find ultimate rest, peace, and joy.

Therefore it is not only not unreasonable to expect the Coming Presence, but it is wise to labour and to pray for that divine Manifestation and Consummation as the logical corollary of human life as well as the central prophecy of its supreme Revelation. It has been said that "the Christ we are waiting for is one whose habit is to surprise the world." It is not for us "to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within His own authority," but it is ours to make ready the paths for the flaming of His Advent glory. For "the earnest expectation of the creation awaiteth the revealing of the Sons of God."

"Surely He cometh, and a thousand voices shout to the saints
and to the deaf are dumb ;
Surely He cometh, and the earth rejoices glad in His coming
who hath sworn, I come."

MARAN-ATHA

Printed in the United States of America

DATE DUE

GAYLORD

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

232.6
T456

Thomas, Frank Morehead.

AUTHOR

The coming presence.

TITLE

232.6
T456 Thomas, Frank Morehead.
The coming presence.

N15912